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SPORT AND DEVIANCE:
A SUBCULTURAL ANALYSIS

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "SPORT AND DEVIANCE: A SUBCULTURAL ANALYSIS" submitted by REX W. THOMSON, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether participation in sport acts as a deterrent to deviant behaviour in non-sport situations. Specifically, does membership in a sports subculture, in this instance the rugby football subculture, act as a deterrent to deviant behaviour, or does the subculture condone, encourage, or even require such behaviour?

Within an interactionist perspective, and utilizing the techniques of participant observation, an analysis of the behaviour of members of the rugby football subculture was carried out, focussing on that behaviour which appeared to violate the accepted standards of the larger community. Evidence presented suggests that strong "traditions of deviance" exist within the subculture, and that deviant behaviour is commonplace within the group.

An examination was made of the reaction of members of the subculture towards such behaviour, and it would seem fair to suggest that none of the traditions and rituals, nor the typical behaviour of the members could be classified as "deviant" within the frame of reference of the group. An examination was also made of the public reaction towards this behaviour. Despite the fact that seemingly deviant behaviour was commonplace, no significant sanctions were imposed against members of the group by the general public, and legal sanctions against their behaviour were virtually non-existent.

In the concluding analysis, limitations of certain theories of

deviance were posited, and the notion of "legitimate deviance" considered. Positively and negatively sanctioned groups in society were briefly examined, and a brief analysis attempted of the themes of ideological consensus and ideological conflict. Gramsci's concept of hegemony was introduced, and argument presented which suggests that the institution of sport plays an important part in the hegemonic process in capitalist societies.

For this reason, it was suggested that there will be a significant repression of the reported incidence of deviant behaviour by sportsmen, since such behaviour is antithetical to the supposed inherent ability of sport to develop "desirable" character. This is not to suggest that all instances of deviant behaviour by athletes are ignored, but that the incidence of such behaviour is likely to be significantly greater than that which is drawn to the public attention. Where the general public and agencies of social control are aware of such behaviour, athletes appear to benefit from a "legitimization" of their seemingly anti-social acts.

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I

INTRODUCTION

The Sociology of Sport - An Overview

Organized, competitive sport has been widely discussed by physical educators and enthusiastic laymen for many years. In the past, there have also been significant contributions by historians and sociologists toward a serious analysis of the social significance of this phenomenon (see e.g. Veblen, 1899; Sumner, 1906; Krout, 1929; Mumford, 1934; Paxson, 1941; Huizinga, 1949; Riesman, 1950; Betts, 1953; Denney, 1957; Coleman, 1961). It has only been in the past decade, however, that consistent attention by a variety of academic scholars has been paid to the social institution of sport (cf. Crase, 1976).

Historically, it is not difficult to explain this situation. As Stone has commented, "the serious analysis of popular sport is construed to be beneath the dignity of many academics" (1971: 62), and others have further elaborated on this notion (see e.g. Dunning, 1967, 1971a; Heinilä, 1968; Somers, 1972; Edwards, 1973: Kiviaho, 1973; Page, 1973; Sage, 1974; Snyder, 1974; Snyder and Spreitzer, 1974). Physical educators, too, despite their long interest in sport, have been slow to provide <u>empirical</u> support for the many claims made by early leaders of their profession concerning the social benefits associated with sports participation. As Rhodes and Butler point out, "the functional value of sport was seldom challenged, and it has long enjoyed a near religious

appeal" (1975: 920), yet despite its pervasive character, the serious study of sport or its social import generally failed to attract the scholarly attention that it deserved. In recent years, however, this situation has changed considerably. Gruneau (1976a) maintains that one of the reasons for a growing interest in the sociological analysis of sport is that superficial explanations of the phenomenon are no longer seen as sufficient. For many, "indifference has been replaced by an uneasiness about the kind of institution that modern sport has become, and by a desire to understand the causal forces underlying its development" (Gruneau, 1976a: 9).

Today, the subdiscipline of the sociology of sport appears to have grasped an ever-strengthening foothold in the world of academia, significant landmarks in the development of the area being the establishment of the International Committee for the Sociology of Sport in 1964, and the publication of the International Review of Sport Sociology commencing in 1966. An American newsletter, the Sport Sociology Bulletin, was initiated in 1972, and a North American journal of sport sociology is to commence publication in 1976. In addition, an ever increasing number of universities are offering undergraduate and graduate programmes in the area (cf. Daniels, 1966: Lowe, 1974; McPherson, 1975), and a growing number of the established sociological journals have included articles specifically concerned with the importance and scope of the subdiscipline.

A further indication of the growth of the sociology of sport has been the number of texts and readers published in the area following Cozens and Stumpf's (1953) early contribution to the field (see e.g. Natan, 1958; McIntosh, 1963; Morton, 1963; Kenyon, 1969a; Loy and Kenyon, 1969; Lüschen, 1970; Sage, 1970; Dunning, 1971b; Miller and Russell,

1971; Harris, 1972; Hart, 1972, 1976; Stone, 1972; Edwards, 1973; Mangan, 1973; Talamini and Page, 1973; Gerber et al., 1974; Ball and Loy, 1975; Ibrahim, 1975; Gruneau and Albinson, 1976; Landers, 1976; Pavia and Jaques, 1976, Yiannakis et al., 1976). Contributions by European scholars, although largely ignored by Western academics, have also contributed conspicuously to the development of the subdiscipline at an international level (see e.g. Wohl, 1961; Magnane, 1964; Lüschen, 1966; Meynaud, 1966; Bouet, 1968; Rigauer, 1969; Krawczyk, 1970; Berthaud et al., 1972; Krockow, 1974).

Any emerging discipline or subdiscipline, however, seems destined to spend its formative years evidencing a greater concern for semantics and the definition of the boundaries of its particular domain than in substantive research in the area. The sociology of sport is no exception. Kenyon typifies this concern, stating that "before we go any further, we need to do some conceptual spadework" (1969b: 77), and he is not alone in this respect (see e.g. Erbach, 1966; Kane and Murray, 1966; Wohl, 1966; Dunning, 1967, 1971a; Loy and Kenyon, 1969; Loy, 1970; Hendry, 1973). In common with the parent discipline of sociology, issues concerning methodological perspectives have also invited considerable attention from scholars in the sociology of sport (see e.g. Loy and Segrave, 1974; Ball, 1975; Lüschen, 1975; McPherson, 1975; Wohl, 1975).

While a concern for conceptualization and methodology is apparent, this is not to suggest that substantive research in the area has been ignored. One reason for this, aside from the wider acceptance of the area and increasing involvement in substantive research by sociologists, is the growing interest shown by physical educators in such activity. Troubled by the rising tide of criticism of sport, they are cognizant of

the fact that a reliance on popular myth or folklore is hardly sufficient at a time when the study of sport is becoming increasingly more popular and sophisticated. It is not surprising, therefore, that substantive research is seen as desirable; research which will provide empirical evidence concerning the social effects of sports participation. As Hellison puts it, "if we really intend to use theory in the practice of physical education . . . I favor a close alliance which will provide value-oriented objectives for the discipline (sociology of sport) and useful theory for the profession (of physical education)" (1970: 110).

The notion of "value-oriented objectives," however, seems to reject the value-free or value-neutral stance espoused by many scholars concerned with sociological analysis. In defining the parameters of the sociology of sport, Loy and Kenyon (1969) offered prescriptions which suggested that the subdiscipline could well adopt the paradigm of the natural sciences. They made a distinction between two basic approaches in the area, namely normative and nonnormative sport sociology. The former approach assumes "that certain social goals are implicitly established and that considerable consensus exists as to their nature" (Loy and Kenyon, 1969: 9). The implicit assumption in such an approach is that sport contributes to desirable social development. This approach, as Loy and Kenyon suggest, is hardly in keeping with the interests of rigorous science.

The nonnormative approach, on the other hand, posits that the study of society should be as objective as possible, namely value-free, and such an approach received considerable early support (see e.g. Kenyon and Loy, 1965; Kane and Murray, 1966; Kenyon, 1969c). That much of the current research in the sociology of sport tends to favour a non-

normative approach (cf. Rhodes and Butler, 1975) is not difficult to explain, if the development of this subdiscipline is examined in its historical context. As Innes and Thomson (1975) have suggested, those who had shown an interest in the sociological analysis of sport had often been associated with physical education. The latter had been involved in its own struggle to gain acceptance as a legitimate area of study. The scientific method of a positivist tradition was an important element of the background of a professional group whose members had been previously involved in such areas as the physiology of exercise and human motor performance. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the scientific method which had been successfully applied to the natural world of physical activities should now be applied to the new focus of attention on the social world of sport. Such an assumption, however, rests on a positivist notion of the unity of science.

The basic assumption of those adopting a nonnormative and value-free approach to the study of sport is that since sport is neither a priori good nor a priori bad, the emphasis should be to explain the influence of sport as a social system on other social systems, and the influence of the latter on sport (cf. Loy and Kenyon, 1969). There is sufficient controversy over the value-free approach in sociological analysis, however, to indicate that the issue cannot be resolved simply by a declaration of scientific intent. As Gruneau points out, Kenyon and Loy's (1965) early advice to adopt such an approach was largely motivated by a desire to separate research into sport's social dimensions "from the spirit of Rotarianism that had infused the traditional physical educator's approach to sport for over a century" (1976a: 27). In essence, then, what Kenyon and Loy were suggesting was "that individuals should

try to control a priori assumptions about sport when doing sociological research, and that science provides the "best" method for doing so" (Gruneau, 1976a: 27), and there can be little argument with this concern.

Perspectives and Approaches in the Sociology of Sport

It is possible to identify several different theoretical perspectives and approaches in the sociology of sport. In his extensive bibliographic review, Lüschen (1968) made several suggestions regarding the development of the area. He was supportive of structural functionalism as a suitable theoretical perspective, but also emphasized theories of the middle range (cf. Merton, 1967) and advocated research oriented toward the falsification of hypotheses (cf. Popper, 1963).

Structural functionalism received other early support as a suitable theoretical perspective for the sociological analysis of sport (see e.g. Loy and Kenyon, 1969; Allardt, 1970), and has indeed been utilized in the area (see e.g. Lüschen, 1967; Loy, 1969; Bend, 1971; Edwards, 1973). Such a perspective probably represents the closest that sociologists have come to accepting a "paradigm" in Kuhn's (1962) sense of the word, and scholars working within such a perspective have contributed to the growing body of knowledge in the subdiscipline. As Innes and Thomson have suggested, there is little doubt that structural functionalism has been able to bring into sharper focus a number of important aspects of society, and that it has indicated "how it has been possible for a social system to evolve and exist rather than the Hobbesian 'war of all against all'" (1975: 7).

Such an approach, however, both in sociology (see e.g. Dahrendorf, 1958; Gouldner, 1970) and in the sociology of sport (see e.g. Scott,

1972; Melnick, 1975) has been the subject of considerable criticism in recent years. Dawe's (1970) suggestion that there are "two sociologies" serves to illustrate some of the problems inherent in a structural functionalist approach. According to Dawe, the two sociologies, "system sociology" and "action sociology", are grounded in diametrically opposed concerns which posit antithetical views of human nature, of society, and of the relationship between society and the individual. System sociology, being primarily concerned with the problem of order, asserts the necessity of external constraint for the well-being of both the individual and society. The "oversocialized" (cf. Wrong, 1961) and system-oriented picture of structural functionalism is such that the individual is seen as little more than a functionary of the system, playing a particular role that is specified by the system (cf. Innes and Thomson, 1975). As Gouldner puts it, "to seek or prefer order is to seek or prefer 'structures': the structure of social action not the process" (1970: 251). This commitment to social order may also be seen as a tacit commitment to the status quo, an aspect of structural functionalism which has been the target of much polemic criticism.

The atheoretical survey studies usually reflect assumptions similar to those of the structural functional approach. These studies, while producing a useful supply of baseline information, rarely offer much in the way of explanation to relate the data to societal issues or characteristics of the social structure and process. Kenyon's (1968) cross-cultural study is an example, in that it presents a wealth of statistical information but offers little in the way of explanation for the trends it portrays. Similar observations may be made of Robinson's study. Although trends are portrayed concerning levels of participation in physical acti-

vity, the author himself states that "we have relatively little to offer about the dynamic structure of sports within society" (1970: 172).

Alternative approaches, however, would seem to claim allegiance to Dawe's concept of "action sociology" which is primarily concerned with the problem of how individuals can control the system they have helped to create. The interactionist perspective, in a general sense, emphasizes such an approach, recognizing as it does the importance of face-to-face relations in society. Rather than a passive recipient of the collection of role-expectations imposed by the social system which the structural functionalists seem to be describing, interactionists argue that individuals have a part in creating their social role and the social milieu in which they live (cf. Innes and Thomson, 1975). Such a perspective would include the approaches of phenomenological sociology, including symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology, and it may be helpful to identify their particular foci of attention in a very generalized way. Phenomenological sociology examines the social reality of groups of individuals in terms of the meanings those individuals attach to their actions. Scott (1968) characterizes such an approach in developing his explanation of the jockey's world in the "first order constructs" of the actors rather than the "second order constructs" of the researcher (cf. Schutz, 1967).

Symbolic interactionism is concerned primarily with the ways in which individuals come to know their social environment through the meanings they learn in the course of their interaction with others. One of its leading and most eloquent exponents, Stone (1969) typifies such an approach in exploring the social relationships that are mobilized by sports and sport activities. Ethnomethodology focuses on the rules and interpretations that individuals take for granted in their everyday

affairs. Such an approach has considerable potential for investigating sports situations, and an examination of the underlying, informal rules which players, officials and spectators superimpose on the formal codes that exist in a particular sport plays an important part in the formulation of the characteristics of the game (see e.g. Faulkner, 1973; Tindall, 1973). The employment of an interactionist perspective can be readily identified in the sociology of sport (see also Charnofsky, 1968; Arnold, 1972; Ingham and Loy, 1973), and the contribution of such efforts to the development of the area have been considerable.

Examination of a further trend, which might be called a radical or New Left tradition, may provide an insight into other developments in the area. Fundamental to the radical viewpoint is a critique of sport, its effects, and its relations to social, political and economic matters. Representatives of this approach often present an overtly political stance with regard to the significance of sport in society, claiming that if there is no attempt to go further than inquiring after how sport is functional to society then a one-sided picture of sport emerges (cf. Innes and Thomson, 1975).

Hoch (1972) presents the most forceful image of the radical approach, and uses a variety of sources to forward his "Marxian" theory of sport in society. It may well be that Hoch overstates his case in suggesting that sport is being distorted by the political role it is being made to play. Nevertheless, his attempt to relate the phemonenon of sport <u>in</u> society to structures of the macro-setting represents a worthwhile contribution to the development of an alternative perspective. Prior to Hoch, the New Left tradition was perhaps most clearly exemplified by such writers as Webb (1969) and Schafer (1971a, 1971b), while other significant contributions,

particularly in the area of race relations, have added considerably to a radical critique of sport (see e.g. Thompson, 1964; Edwards, 1969; Scott, 1970, 1971; Hain, 1971; Lapchick, 1975). It is perhaps in the "popular" literature, however, that the radical approach is most obvious. As Page (1969) and Scott (1972) have suggested, some of the most perceptive writing on American sports has been provided by former athletes and journalists. This growing body of literature reveals the less virtuous side of the sports world, and often views sport as a repressive social institution which degrades, exploits and dehumanizes athletes (see e.g. Olsen, 1969; Bouton, 1970; Meggysey, 1971; Shaw, 1972).

According to Gruneau, the approach of radical sociologists is essentially an ideological criticism of the apolitical nature of sociology, and is directed against "the passive 'scientific' technicians of the forces seeking to maintain the status quo" (1976a: 25). A major problem inherent in such an approach, however, is that the attempt to reconstruct sport will not be achieved by social criticism alone. Ingham maintains that "any attempt to impose an athletic revolution from without is not only a contradiction of Marxist premises, but also an imposition which would lack popular support" (1976: 247). The simple replacement of one orthodoxy with another hardly constitutes an answer to the problem of alienation, false consciousness and dehumanization (cf. Berger, 1974).

In light of the differing theoretical perspectives and approaches which have been adopted, it may be useful to examine the reasons advanced in support of a sociological analysis of sport, and to explicitly delineate the position to be adopted in this present investigation.

The Sociological Analysis of Sport

The arguments put forward in support of a sociological analysis of

sport can be summarized as supportive of two basic assumptions. The first of these assumptions is that sport *per se* is of such significance in contemporary society that it deserves as much attention from sociologists as the more conventional specialities of the parent discipline, or the related assumption that sport be viewed as a social reality *sui generis* (see e.g. Page, 1969, 1973; Sage, 1974; Snyder and Spreitzer, 1974; Dunning, 1975; Ball, 1976). As Page suggests, "sport has emerged as a major social institution on a worldwide scale" (1973: 7), and observes that although this recognition has been slow, scholars are inevitably turning to sport as a field of serious study.

A second reason advanced in support of such endeavour is based on the assumption that sport provides a useful medium through the analysis of which general sociological theory may be tested, developed and refined (see e.g. Loy and Kenyon, 1969; Loy, 1972a, 1972b; Edwards, 1973; Snyder, 1974; Snyder and Spreitzer, 1974; Ball, 1976). Rhodes and Butler advocate such an approach, claiming that in investigating sport as a social phenomenon it should be possible for scholars "to develop testable theoretical propositions which have applicability in the broader social arena" (1975: 925).

It would be difficult to argue with the claim that sport is a significant aspect of contemporary society, although as Gruneau has noted, "the argument that sport can be studied as a reality 'sui generis' might be taken as a denial of the role that 'outside' material forces play in conditioning sport's internal structure and logic" (1976a: 11). With respect to the second assumption, there seems little reason to find fault with any attempt to refine or develop sociological theory *via* the medium of sport. These two assumptions, however, do not exhaust the possibilities

in favour of sociological inquiry, as such a description ignores the possibility of a deeper commitment on the part of the sociologist. Thus, a third assumption, as Gray has emphasized, is that the sociological analysis of sport (or any sociological analysis for that matter) is entertained because the investigation "might possibly contribute substantively to the enlightenment and, therefore, potential benefit of mankind" (1975: 278). In an attack on the value-free approach in sociology and of the failure of sociologists to come to grips with the question of ideological commitment, Gray argues that the value-free stance "confuses and encourages contributions allegedly sociological but finally socially trivial" (1975: 280).

Maslow (1970) is another who has rejected the notion of a value-free science, maintaining that science is not, and cannot be completely objective in the sense of being independent of human values. He is more in favour of a value-instigated search by value-seeking scientists (cf. Hellison, 1970). Provided that the concepts of objectivity and value-neutrality are not confused, Maslow argues that a normative zeal to help mankind and to possibly better the world as we know it is quite compatible with scientific objectivity (cf. Lynd, 1940). Gouldner (1970), too, is emphatic that the work of the sociologist is continually influenced by his "background" or "domain assumptions." Social theories, according to Gouldner, contain at least two distinguishable elements. The first is the explicitly formulated assumptions or "postulates." The second element is the background assumptions "out of which the postulates in part emerge and, on the other hand, not being expressly formulated, they remain in the background of the theorist's attention" (1970: 29). Gouldner claims that value-free sociology is not possible (cf. Gruneau, 1976a), and that the only choice "is between an expression of one's values as open and as

honest as it can be . . . and a vain ritual of moral neutrality which . . . leaves it at the mercy of irrationality" (1963: 51). As Snyder and Spreitzer have observed, "one's weltanschauung colors even scientific observation, description, and explanation of what is seen" (1975: 3).

In examining the possibility of a non-normative social science, Israel (1972) argues that all social sciences begin with stipulative presuppositions (or normative notions) about the nature of man, about society, and about the relationship between man and society. He claims that these normative notions are the foundation for the formulation of sentences expressing statements about "laws of the social world." Thus, "the social sciences start with acts of conceptual commitment, [and] theories about the social world are in one way or another derived from these normative points of departure" (1972: 76).

Such a position has a considerable history. Mannheim (1936), in referring to the "perspective" of the researcher, separated the theory of ideology from the proper subject matter of the sociology of knowledge. The task of the former, according to Mannheim, is "to unmask the more or less conscious deceptions and disguises of various human interest groups" (1936: 265). The sociology of knowledge, however, concentrating on a "one-sidedness of observation which is not due to more or less conscious intent" (Mannheim, 1936: 265), is clearly what Israel (1972) has in mind when he refers to the "normative points of departure" in the social sciences, or the social construction of reality as posited by Berger and Luckmann (1967).

The point to be emphasized, then, is that competing theoretical perspectives and approaches in sociological inquiry are embedded within different ideological positions. This should not be interpreted as meaning

that any one perspective is necessarily more "correct" than any other. Gruneau has suggested that the most important task is not to pass judgment on the differing perspectives, as each "tend to address different issues and thereby have credibility within the framework of their own [ideological] assumptions" (1976a: 35). The most important point is that sociologists should be aware of the ideological antecedents of the particular perspective in which they situate their work, and these should be made as explicit as possible to the reader.

Orientation of the Study

A distinction which has been drawn between sport sociology and the sociology of sport (see e.g. Kenyon, 1969b; Hoyle, 1971; Lowe, 1974; Innes and Thomson, 1975) may serve to focus on the orientation of this study. According to McPherson (1975), sport sociology focuses on sport, and asks such questions as in what ways sociology can inform sport. Sociology has indeed been applied for practical purposes to a number of areas of inquiry, and there seems little doubt that it can also be applied successfully to sport so as to further the interests of sport. The sociology of sport would go further than this narrow interpretation would suggest, however, and would concern itself with the significance of sport in society (cf. Kiviaho, 1973). Thus, as Gruneau has emphasized, the main thrust of the subdiscipline is the continuous effort to "relate sport to general features of social organization in order to gain a more coherent and comprehensive understanding of institutional relationships in the whole society and the place of sporting activities within them" (1976a: 10).

Gruneau's own investigations of sport and social inequality (1975), and the democratization of Canadian sport (1976b) provide classic examples

of this orientation. He stresses that the study of sport must be concerned both with an objective description of the structure and ideological characteristics of sport and with the relationship of this structure and ideology to that of the dominant culture. His work is especially noteworthy in that he attempts to integrate the findings and problems of the general field of sociological theory with a discussion of macro-sociological issues relating to his particular investigations. As such, Gruneau's approach is a significant departure from the mainstream of sociological analysis of sport, and represents a most sophisticated analysis of the phenomenon of sport in contemporary society.

The position to be adopted in this present investigation (cf. Innes and Thomson, 1975) will incorporate many of the features of sociological analysis already discussed. It rejects scholarship for its intrinsic value, and instead is humanistic; it sees the concerns of humanity as the focus of interest. In rejecting the accumulation of knowledge for its own sake, it favours in its place the investigation of significant problems as suggested by one's ideological commitment (cf. Lynd, 1940). It is also critical in the sense that it sees progress in the understanding of the social world arising from critique, provided that such criticism is itself subjected to critical analysis. Self-proclaimed truths, the denial of the beliefs of others, or the establishment of authority or orthodoxy, have no place in the sociological perspective.

In keeping with such a position, this study will attempt to emphasize the importance of the relationship of sociology with such areas as anthropology, economics, history, politics and psychology. Such an emphasis seeks to integrate the findings of these avenues of inquiry rather than to fragment them within rigid discipline boundaries. Thus, the

investigation will situate the individual in a social context and describe that context in terms of its internal structure and dynamics. This should enable the development of the connection between macro-sociological and historical processes on the one hand, and individual biographies on the other (cf. Mills, 1959). Hopefully, such an approach will provide a satisfactory analysis of the significance of sport in society, an approach which has not yet realized its full potential in the sociology of sport.

Purpose of the Study

Physical educators have long espoused the notion that participation in sport is beneficial in terms of the desirable social development of the participant (cf. Snyder and Spreitzer, 1975). According to Martens, most of the literature concerning sports participation has been "mission-oriented," with physical educators attempting "to prove that participation in these activities inevitably leads to positive social learning" (1975: 101). As Rhodes and Butler suggest, however, "many now openly question the near sacred creeds which hold that competitive athletics build moral character" (1975: 920).

A similar popular assumption is that participation in sports acts as a deterrent to deviant or delinquent behaviour (cf. Edwards, 1973), an assumption clearly illustrated by the slogan "stay out for sports and stay out of courts" (cf. Snyder, 1972b). While there have been many excellent analyses of deviant behaviour <u>within</u> sport (see e.g. Scott, 1968; Steele, 1971; Vaz, 1972; Faulkner, 1973, 1976; Smith, 1975; Lüschen, 1976), of the deviant behaviour of <u>spectators</u> (see e.g. I. Taylor, 1971; Clarke, 1973; Ingham and Smith, 1974; White, 1975), and of <u>deviant sports subcultures</u> (see e.g. Irwin, 1965; Polsky, 1969; Mahigel and Stone, 1971),

there has been little research specifically concerned with the deviant behaviour of athletes in a non-sport situation. Empirical studies by Schafer (1969) and Buhrmann (1971) of the off-the-field behaviour of athletes appear to offer some support for the "deterrent hypothesis," but more recent evidence (see e.g. Thomson and Dayries, 1975; Thomson, 1975) suggests that the situation is far from resolved.

It is not possible to rule out very real alternatives to the explanations offered by both Schafer (1969) and Buhrmann (1971) in support of their findings that athletes appear to be less delinquent than non-athletes. As Schafer himself has stated, the "negative relationship (between sports participation and delinquent behaviour) may have been largely the result of a selection of conformers to the athletic program, rather than the result of the deterring influence of athletics in this direction" (1969: 43). Buhrmann (1971), too, has acknowledged that his findings should not be interpreted as meaning that athletic participation prevents the development of occurrence of delinquent behaviour. The argument that students join athletics because they have greater tendencies to conformity, or that deviants are weeded out of sports teams because they do not measure up to required standards of behaviour, remains a plausible explanation of the relationship.

In his study, Schafer (1969) first developed a theoretical framework concerning sports participation and delinquency. He concluded that each theoretical position, formulated from six general theories of delinquency, leads to the same hypothesis, namely that participation in sports can be expected to exert a deterring influence on delinquent behaviour. To a degree, both Buhrmann (1971) and Thomson and Dayries (1975) accepted this theoretical framework as a basis for their investigations, and the

focus of all three studies has been concentrated on the testing of the above hypothesis. Attention has subsequently been focused on the statistical differences between athletes and nonathletes with regard to the commission of deviant or delinquent acts.

Adopting such a position, however, dominated as it is by statistical comparisons, has several inherent weaknesses. It requires that the rules, the infringement of which constitutes deviancy, are simply taken for granted. It assumes that such rules and regulations are applied without differentiation. Such an approach tells us little about the actual behaviour of athletes; it explains virtually nothing concerning the social forces which may be acting to shape such behaviour. It also leaves unexplained those forces which act to shape societal reaction to this behaviour. It would seem fair to suggest that while such an approach may provide useful baseline information and stimulus for further research, it has relatively little to offer in terms of a meaningful explanation of the relationship between sports participation and deviant behaviour (cf. Thomson, 1975), as it ignores any critical assessment of "the social and legal structures within which the 'deviant' labels are applied" (Gruneau, 1976a: 29).

In terms of a more suitable approach, it seems that an interactionist perspective could well be adopted. It has already been noted that such a perspective places its primary emphasis on face-to-face relations within society. As they interact with others, individuals come to accept some of the values to which they are exposed and reject others; they construct their own meanings as well as adopting the more conventional meanings of their culture. Consequently, an interactionist perspective would provide the most suitable theoretical framework within which to investigate

the actual behaviour of athletes in non-sport situations. In attempting this micro-sociological analysis, the focus will thus be placed on an examination of the athlete in the social structure and social arrangements within which his behaviour takes place (cf. Taylor et al., 1973).

In order to provide an insight into the attitudes of the larger society toward the behaviour of athletes, however, an attempt will be made to investigate the interrelations of institutions within society. Such an analysis must locate the institution of sport within the context of the larger society. It must examine the values and characteristics of the institution of sport and relate these to the values and characteristics of the dominant culture. In this way, the nature of the societal response to the behaviour of athletes may be more readily explained.

Statement of the Problem

The problem with which this present investigation is concerned is to determine whether participation in sport acts as a deterrent to deviant behaviour in non-sport situations. Specifically, does membership in a sports subculture, in this instance the rugby football subculture, act as a deterrent to deviant behaviour, or does the subculture condone, encourage or even require such behaviour?

In order to obtain information which may provide an answer to this question, the study will attempt the following:

(a) To examine and describe the norms, values, beliefs, symbols and other subcultural characteristics of the rugby football subculture (hereinafter referred to as the rugby subculture).

(b) To examine the behaviour of members of the rugby subculture, focusing on that behaviour which appears to violate the accepted standards of the

larger community.

(c) To examine the reaction of members of the rugby subculture towards the behaviour of fellow members, in order to determine which behaviour is treated as deviant within the subculture.

(d) To examine the public reaction towards the behaviour of members of the rugby subculture, in order to determine which behaviour is treated as deviant by the larger community.

II

CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

The Concept of Subculture

Over the past decade or more there has been a widespread use of the term "subculture," both in popular writings and in academic sociology. While the concept has become generally accepted in sociological analysis and is now a feature of everyday language, there have been some doubts expressed as to its utility. Much of the critical comment concerning subcultures has arisen because of a lack of clarity and indiscriminate use of the concept (see e.g. Yinger, 1960; Arnold, 1970a; Phillips and Schafer, 1971b; Clarke, 1974). Nevertheless, it would seem that the concept has the potential to be utilized as one of sociology's most basic tools. As Arnold maintains, properly defined, it should "take its place as a central concept in sociological analysis" (1972: 1).

Although he did not specifically use the term, Sutherland's (1939) description of "behavior systems" as a sociological unit or entity probably represents a close approximation to the modern concept of subculture. A behaviour system, according to Sutherland, is:

> an integrated unit, which includes, in addition to the individual acts, the codes, traditions, esprit de corps, social relationships among the direct participants, and indirect participation of many other persons. It is thus essentially a groupway of life (1939: 219).

In similar vein, Hollingshead (1939) asserted that the behaviour systems

of definable functional groups in society were worthy of examination by sociologists and anthropologists. His description of these groups is illuminating:

> Persons in more or less continuous association evolve behaviour traits and cultural mechanisms which are unique to the group and differ in some way from those of other groups and from the larger socio-cultural complex. That is, every continuing social group develops a variant culture and a body of social relations peculiar and common to its members. This complex on the overt side may be characterized by discernable behavior of the group members in relation to each other, and to those who do not belong; and on the covert side, by an ethos or ideology which includes mores, codes, and other rules, which take the form of sanctions binding upon the membership in their relations to each other and to the external social world (1939: 816).

Certainly, Hollingshead appears to have grasped the essential features of the modern concept of subculture somewhat in advance of its acceptance in sociological analysis.

While reference to "subcultures" had been used in earlier works (cf. Lee, 1945), Green provided the early impetus to a conceptualization of the term. In using subculture and population segment as interchangeable terms, he claimed that:

> in modern society, no individual participates in the total cultural complex totally, but primarily in a series of population segments grouped according to sex, age, class, occupation, region, religion, and ethnic group -- all with somewhat differing norms and expectations of conduct (1946: 534).

Following Green, Gordon (1947) made one of the first formal attempts at a description of the concept. Gordon referred to a subculture as:

> a subdivision of a national culture, composed of a combination of factorable social situations . . . forming in their combination a functioning unity which has an integrated impact on the participating individual (1947: 40, emphasis in the original).

Gordon was alert to the potential of the concept, and identified clearly the contributions which he felt should be forthcoming from its adoption in sociological analysis:

> A wider use of the concept of the sub-culture would . . . give us a keen and incisive tool which would, on the one hand, prevent us from making too broad groupings when such inclusiveness is not warranted, and on the other hand, enable us to discern relatively closed and cohesive systems of social organization which currently we tend to analyze separately with our more conventional tools of "class" and "ethnic group" (1946: 41).

As Green (1946) had suggested, subcultures may be based on occupational, racial or ethnic, and class or regional similarities, while the term has also been applied to a variety of other social aggregations such as age groups, delinquent gangs, and more latterly to groups with a common interest in leisure or sports activities. Nevertheless, while there has been a widespread application of the term, there has been insufficient attention paid to the functioning of such units and their impact on the behaviour of participating individuals (cf. Phillips and Schafer, 1971). Undoubtedly, the greatest use of the concept has been made by those sociologists concerned with an examination of deviant or delinquent groups and lifestyles, and it was in this area that the early impetus to recent developments in subcultural theory was provided.

Cohen's (1955) description of the creation and characteristics of subcultures has proven extremely valuable. In developing a general theory of subcultures, Cohen examined the problem of how it was possible for cultural innovation to emerge in spite of the pressures to conform which are generated by the dominant culture. A crucial condition for the emergence of new cultural forms, according to Cohen, "is the existence, in effective interaction with one another, of a number of actors with similar

problems of adjustment" (1955: 59, emphasis in the original). Thus:

> In this fashion, culture is continually being created, re-created and modified whenever individuals sense in one another like needs, generated by like circumstances, not shared generally in the larger social system (p. 65).

The interaction situation facilitates a transformation of the frame of reference of the group, and the emergence of group standards or norms from this shared frame of reference constitutes the emergence of a new subculture. It is obvious, however, that Cohen sees subcultures as emerging primarily in response to a situation or problem (cf. Murdock, 1973). As Gans puts it, "The subcultures which I have described are responses that people make to the opportunities and the deprivations that they encounter" (1962: 249, emphasis in the original), and such an approach has characterized several attempts at explanation rather than conceptualization of the concept (see e.g. Gillin, 1955; Lewis, 1961; Spergel, 1966).

Further development of the concept is necessary before we can begin to apply it as a sociological tool. According to Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967), a subculture is only partly different from, and spawned by, the dominant culture, and there would appear to be considerable consensus on this point (see e.g. Miller, 1958; Coleman, 1961b; Matza, 1961). Central to the concept, as Wolfgang and Ferracuti see it, is the notion that the norms and values of a particular group can nevertheless be differentiated from those of the dominant culture. These subcultural values:

> are often made evident and can be identified phenomenologically in terms of the conduct that is expected, ranging from the permissable to the required, in certain kinds of life situations (1967: 101).

While a set of cultural patterns may set a group apart from the

larger society, however, it must be recognized that if the dominant values and norms within the particular group not only differ from but conflict with those of the dominant culture, then the term "subculture" is no longer appropriate. Wolfgang and Ferracuti emphasize that:

> no subculture can be totally different from or completely in conflict with the society of which it is a part . . . . To be part of the larger culture implies that some values related to ends or means of the whole are shared by the part (1967: 101).

As Yinger has suggested, "the creation of a series of inverse or counter values in face of serious frustration or conflict" (1960: 627) should more appropriately be described as a contra-culture. While the values of many subcultures probably conflict in some measure with the dominant culture, this conflict element is not the central feature or focal concern of the group. The dominant culture, of course, is not a single set of norms and values accepted equally by every member of society. The use of the term subculture should be restricted to those groups who formulate a way of behaving that includes most of the dominant features of the "cultural average," but also includes certain features not found elsewhere in the society.

How, then, can we apply the designation of subculture with any degree of accuracy or consistency? As Matza explains, subcultures share:

> certain general characteristics. Foremost among these is some degree of differentiation from the parent culture and some degree of provisional utility or function . . . each subculture has special characteristics that reflect its constituency and its position in society (1964a: 59-60).

Thus, a subculture may be defined as a group with a shared set of expectancies producing certain predictable patterns of behaviour which distinguish the particular subculture from other societal groups. What is

necessary, therefore, is to examine and describe the "special characteristics" of any group in order to determine whether we can justifiably refer to such a group as a subculture.

Again, Hollingshead (1939) provided an early insight as to the nature of these special characteristics in his description of specific behaviour systems. These characteristics include the following:

> (1) a group of specialists recognized by society, as well as by themselves, who possess an identifiable complex of common cultural values, communication devices (argot or other symbols), techniques, and appropriate behavior patterns; (2) the acquisition by initiates of the body of esoteric knowledge and appropriate behavior patterns before the novices are accepted by the initiated; (3) appropriate sanctions applied by the membership to control members in their relations with one another and with the larger society, and to control nonmembers in their relations with members (1939: 816-817).

A further aspect to be considered concerns the extent to which membership in a subculture constitutes a major component of identity (cf. Clarke, 1974). Subcultural membership may form a total identity or may simply be an attendant role which is carried out intermittently. As Arnold suggests, no individual need necessarily "live out his life within the boundaries of a single cultural entity" (1970b: 85). He maintains that individuals participate in several subcultures with varying degrees of identification in terms of time, intensity and extensiveness. In criticizing Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) distortion of the nature of members' affiliation to certain subcultures, Arnold argues that the boundaries of subcultures, often sharply drawn for the purposes of sociological description, are seldom so clearly defined. He extends Park's (1928) concept of marginality, and maintains that it should be possible to distinguish between persons who are marginal to a specific subculture from those who are its core members, in a manner similar to Yablonsky's (1959) notion of

"peripheral" members of delinquent gangs.

Perhaps one of the most significant points to be considered, however, is that subcultures, rather than emerging primarily in response to a situation, may alternatively be explained as a result of constant interaction. Irwin suggests that a subculture is formed "when a group of persons remains in interaction or communication over an extended period of time and experiences a reorganization of their beliefs, values and symbolic systems around the particular circumstances of the common relationships" (1970: 110). In order for such a reorganization to occur, according to Irwin, there must also be a strong commitment to the group, a certain degree of general congruence of the individual members' values and beliefs, and distinct qualities in the activities of the group. Thus, Arnold claims, interaction is of considerable importance:

> individuals sharing similar statuses interact more with each other than would be expected by chance, and that out of this interaction comes a system of beliefs, values and norms -- i.e., a subculture -- which is at least somewhat unique . . . where a relevant subculture is already in existence, a similar interaction takes place and through this interaction new occupants of the relevant statuses are socialized into the subculture and thus begin to think and act in accordance with its prescriptions (1970c: 116).

A subculture, then, can be said to exist to the extent that the members of any subgroup differ, while not conflicting, in their norms, values, beliefs or symbols from the dominant culture. It may be viewed as a subdivision of a larger culture, as an approximation to a culture, or as a specific type of culture possessing many, but not all, of the characteristics of the larger culture (cf. Frantz, 1969). Specific or special characteristics (cf. Hollingshead, 1939), the observance of fads or rituals, and standards with regard to appearance in terms of dress and

grooming (cf. Sebald, 1968), may be other useful indicators of the presence and content of a specific subculture. A subculture should also be examined with reference to the strength of its focal concerns (cf. Clarke et al., 1975), its permanence over time, its ability to recruit new members, and the extent to which the members interact and identify with the group. These are the factors which will be considered in this present investigation.

Toward a Definition of Deviance

In searching for a satisfactory definition of deviance, it may be useful to begin by examining the historical meaning of the word crime. In its original sense in everyday language, crime referred to that wide range of behaviour which incurred public disapproval and which violated the accepted standards of the community or society. Such a description today, is much closer to the contemporary notion of deviance (cf. L. Taylor, 1971), yet an acceptable definition of this concept is difficult to find. Consequently, the conceptual and theoretical structure of deviance analysis poses considerable problems.

There are difficulties for the sociologist in dealing with the concept of deviance rather than crime. While codified law may be readily accessible, the "accepted standards" of the group or community are not, and are far less tangible phenomena. With regard to the former, even codified rules may lose their consensual nature over time. Deviations from the rules, far from incurring disapproval, may actually provide the violators with group status and may eventually become general expectations of the group. Paradoxically, the individual who conforms to such formal rules may then become regarded as the "group deviant."

A further problem in examining deviant behaviour is associated with the particular social situation which is being investigated. Behaviour may be acceptable to the family, deviant to the peer group, and acceptable to the wider society. There is a danger of calling something deviant because it would be so in our own social context, because it appears to violate "generally accepted values"; yet such behaviour may not be regarded as deviant within the "deviant's" own membership group. Factors such as these indicate the difficulties which must be faced in any examination of deviant behaviour, yet an attempt must be made to take them into account.

While the sociology of deviance represents one of the most rapidly growing areas in contemporary sociological inquiry, the "state of the field" has been somewhat confused because of the divergent definitions of deviance which have been utilized in research. As Gibbons and Jones have noted, "there is a fundamental ambiguity about deviance which needs to be cleared up prior to efforts to sharpen current explanatory approaches to deviance" (1971: 22). As the authors suggest, two markedly different basic definitions of deviance can be easily located in the sociological literature. One notion restricts deviance to the transgression of major "societal" norms (see e.g. Freidson, 1965; De Lamater, 1968; Lofland, 1969). On the other hand, a much more comprehensive conception holds that deviance consists of violations of both major or minor rules in social systems of all sizes from face-to-face relations to societal collectivities (see e.g. Merton, 1966; Cohen, 1966; Rushing, 1969).

In attempting to arrive at an acceptable definition of deviance, it may be worthwhile to examine the historical development of the concept. Conceptions of deviance have undergone considerable change in recent years,

and this change appears to have followed similar changes in general sociological theory. A noticeable trend in the latter has been a steady movement away from the early social science with its underlying allegiance to the paradigm of the natural sciences. A similar situation (cf. Gibbs, 1966) can be identified concerning sociological inquiry into deviant behaviour and deviants. From an original biological conception (see e.g. Lombroso, 1911), in which the criminal was viewed as biologically distinctive from the non-criminal element of society, the prevailing consensus moved to what Gibbs (1966) refers to as an analytic conception. In the latter, there was a change of emphasis away from the actors to the characteristics of their acts (see e.g. Sellin, 1938), with the acts themselves being construed as in some way injurious to society.

One of the first major theoretical efforts to focus on deviancy rather than crime was the anomie formulation of Merton (1957). It differed from previous attempts to explain deviant behaviour in that the theory was exclusively sociological rather than biological or psychological in orientation. Stressing social-structural influences, the anomie theory is primarily concerned with the differential distribution of deviant patterns along social class lines (see e.g. Cloward, 1959; Clinard, 1964; Cohen, 1965). Theories of cultural transmission have also had considerable influence in the development of a conceptual understanding of deviance. Sutherland's theory of differential association, later expanded by Cressey (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966), was essentially a learning theory of criminal and deviant behaviour. However, while both Merton's and Sutherland's contributions have been considerable, both the anomie and differential association theories have been criticized as inadequate explanations of the concept of deviance (see e.g. Glueck, 1956; Scott and Turner, 1965;

Lemert, 1967; Sagarin, 1975).

More recently still, a new conception involving an interactionist approach to the problem of deviant behaviour has gained considerable prominence. As Rock (1973) has suggested, while sociologists throughout the years have hardly concentrated their attention on deviant behaviour, one of the important exceptions has been the tradition of thought which originated in Simmel and continued through the work of the Chicago school. It is perhaps in the work of Lemert (1951) that this tradition developed into the contemporary interactionist approach to the study of deviant behaviour. In the transformation of criminology to the sociology of deviancy, there was a shift in the nature of the substantive area studied:

> The change connoted a redefinition of crime and deviancy as social occurrences which can be studied with conventional sociological concepts and techniques. Deviancy is a widespread activity and, a priori, it should not be regarded as intellectually sacred or mysterious. Connections between events in nondeviant settings are not magically severed when the events are produced in deviant settings . . . deviancy became no longer pathological or extraordinary (Rock, 1973: 12).

The "social reaction theorists" of this tradition drew attention to the activities of the rule-creators and enforcers, and consequently redirected the focus of investigation to questions of social structure and the social arrangements within which the deviant process takes place (cf. Emerson, 1969; Lemert, 1970; Taylor et al., 1973).

The most prominent trend in this approach is the labelling perspective. As Gibbs has noted, such a perspective flatly rejects "that some intrinsic feature characterizes deviants and/or deviant acts" (1966: 10), or as Taylor puts it, "societal reaction rather [than] societal inequality is the root of all evil -- and the act of rule-breaking is seen either as

capricious or as an inadequate cry of protest" (1974: 6). Thus, as Erikson would have it, "deviance is not a property inherent in any particular kind of behaviour, it is a property conferred upon that behaviour by the people who come into direct or indirect contact with it" (1966: 6, emphasis in the original). There are problems, however, with such a description. It could well be argued that it is not simply the people who come into contact with certain types of behaviour who determine the acceptability or otherwise of such acts. It is rather a question of whether or not such an audience has the power to decide whether these acts will be considered deviant or permissable.

In similar vein to Erikson, Becker argued that the new approach to the study of deviance always involves an interactional process between the deviant and his audience:

> From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an "offender." The deviant is one to whom the label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label (1963: 9).

The labelling perspective has been criticized in that it shows little concern for etiological factors and fails to answer the question of why certain persons commit deviant acts and others do not. In addition, its critics claim that if the application of rules and sanctions by the audience to the actor is necessary for defining an act as deviant, then it would seem that such an approach in unable to cope with the question of "secret deviance." It is for these and other reasons that labelling is seen by many of its detractors as a theory about reactions to deviant behaviour rather than as a theory of deviancy per se (see e.g. Gibbs, 1966; Taylor et al., 1973; Sagarin, 1975).

With respect to secret deviance, a somewhat more encompassing definition of the concept of deviance has been provided by Schur (1971), and it would seem able to incorporate those deviant acts which remain undiscovered. According to Schur:

> Human behavior is deviant to the extent that it comes to be viewed as involving a personally discreditable departure from a group's normative expectations, and it elicits interpersonal or collective reactions that serve to "isolate," "treat," "correct," or "punish" individuals engaged in such behavior (1971: 24, emphasis in the original).

Such a definition would include secret acts of deviance if Goffman's (1963a) differentiation between discreditable and discredited is used, "the former being a secret characteristic that would produce negative reactions if discovered, and the latter unconcealed, perhaps visible" (Sagarin, 1975: 9). The emphasis, however, is still placed upon the act rather than the actor, and in order to incorporate both into a concept of deviance, Sagarin makes a significant modification to Schur's definition:

> I would not speak of human behavior as deviant, but of human behavior or human beings as deviant, for this usage permits one to understand that deviance is a matter of being or doing, and perhaps both, but that under some circumstances it may be one without the other (1975: 9).

A problem still remains, however, in that the performance of deviant or criminal acts may fail to elicit any societal sanctions even when the actors make no attempt to conceal their actions from the larger society. There is a degree of choice on the part of the social audience, and the immediate reaction of the audience in terms of the range of choices available requires explanation (cf. Taylor et al., 1973). Social class, status, privilege, community expectations, social situation — all of these may be confounding factors in determining the acceptability or otherwise of

certain types of behaviour and in determining the type of societal reaction invoked (see e.g. Sutherland, 1940; Garfinkel, 1949; Cohen and Short, 1961; Vincent, 1961; Becker, 1963).

According to Taylor et al. (1973), an acceptable theory of deviance must be able to situate:

> the act in terms of its wider structural origins. These 'structural' considerations will involve recognition of the intermediate structural questions that have traditionally been the domain of sociological criminology (e.g. ecological areas, subcultural location . . .) but it would place these against the overall social context of inequalities of power, wealth and authority in the developed industrial society (1973: 270).

A similar point of view has been expressed by many of those operating within the labelling perspective. As Becker observed:

> the point is that the response of other people has to be regarded as problematic. Just because one has committed an infraction of the rule does not mean that others will respond as though this had happened (1963: 12).

Becker provides two specific illustrations of such a situation, pointing out that middle class youth seldom get far in the legal process when apprehended by the police, while illicit sexual relations seldom result in punishment or censure unless the girl happens to become pregnant.

Taylor et al. assert that if a state of freedom from material necessity were to prevail in contemporary society, "there would be no politically, economically, and socially-induced need to criminalize deviance" (1973: 270, emphasis added). The constraints of modern industrial society may indeed induce a need to criminalize deviance. It would appear, however, that these same constraints may also bring about a legitimization of deviant behaviour, and such a notion has considerable implications for this present investigation.

In discussing the nature of urban festivals, Ossenberg points out that "there is a general relaxation of formal social controls, with fewer arrests than usual" (1969: 30). Ossenberg claims that middle class attitudes generally abound with inhibitions and taboos against deviant behaviour:

> members of the middle class are more sensitive to legal and other restrictive norms and consequently may be more responsive to the relaxation of social controls represented by the relatively lax enforcement during community festivals (1969: 30).

Ossenberg's hypothesis was supported by his findings, and he concluded that these community festivals provided the opportunity for the middle class to indulge in "socially approved deviant behaviour."

Further support for the notion of legitimate deviance has been provided by Listiak (1974) in his investigation of bar behaviour on the occasion of a prominent Canadian sports festival. According to Listiak:

> it is commonly known that there are times when and places where widespread deviant behaviour is socially sanctioned and highly tolerated, when, it may be said, deviant behaviour is legitimate. During periods of legitimate deviance a "Time Out" is "called" from the demands of accountability and conformity, social control is relaxed, and almost anything goes (1974: 13).

In summarizing the anthropological literature on the subject, MacAndrew and Edgerton (1970) have noted the universality and frequency of these ceremonial Time Outs among Indians. While such Time Outs "are characterized by a great amount of aggression, violence, debauchery, generally wild behaviour, and, in many cases, extreme drunkenness" (Listiak, 1974: 13), there are certain culturally determined limits of legitimization. According to MacAndrew and Edgerton:

> we have come to recognize the operation of what might

> best be determined a within-limits clause governing one's drunken excesses. By this term, "within-limits", we refer to the fact that, with rare exceptions, for even the most seemingly disinhibited drunkard there are limits beyond which he does not go . . . the continued existence of limits of any kind gives the lie to the conventionally accepted notion that when one is drunk, his now "uninhibited impulses" take over, and his resulting comportment is no longer under control (1970: 67).

As Listiak points out, these ceremonial Time Outs are by no means restricted to the primitive Indian societies which MacAndrew and Edgerton have described, but that modern industrialized societies also have a multitude of such rituals. There are thousands of festivals, celebrations, and spectacles at the community and other levels, these urban festivals being characterized by:

> a state of loosened social control which permits and even encourages, within-limits, boisterous and aggressive behaviour, property destruction, illicit sexual behaviour, excessive drinking and drunkenness, frenzied commercial activity, etc. (Listiak, 1974: 14).

Sociologists have frequently claimed that deviant behaviour functions as a "safety-valve" in society (see e.g. Davis, 1966; Erikson, 1964, 1966). According to Dentler and Erikson, "Deviant behavior functions to help maintain group equilibrium" (1959: 107), while Coser maintains that "in the process of uniting itself against deviance, the community not only revives and maintains common sentiments but creatively establishes moral rules and redefines 'normal' behavior" (1962: 173). The functions of "deviant" deviance have thus attracted considerable attention, and periods of "legitimate" deviance are seen by some to perform a similar service to society (see e.g. Turner and Killian, 1957; Smith, 1968):

> By allowing such deviance to occur legitimately during the safety-valve of a "controlled" setting, the society supposedly drains off tensions and

> strains which could accumulate and eventually "explode" into more "destructive" forms of deviance with a minimum of adverse consequences (Listiak, 1974: 14-15).

It would appear, then, that there are times when certain forms of deviance are socially sanctioned, and are highly tolerated despite the fact that they are widespread. The notion of legitimate deviance thus appears to be an important factor which should not be ignored.

For the purposes of this present investigation, deviance is defined in a rather broad sense as behaviour which violates generally held or accepted standards of the group, community or society. In recognition of the fact that a classification of behaviour acceptable or otherwise will vary depending on the social context in which it occurs, the behaviour of the members of the rugby subculture will be examined with reference both to the subculture itself, and with reference to the larger society. Certain behaviour, which appears to violate the accepted standards of the society, may fail, however, to invoke any societal reaction in terms of sanctions or punishment. Rather than assert that such behaviour is not deviant because the label of deviant has not been applied, the notion of legitimate deviance will be utilized. It may well prove that such behaviour should more correctly be identified as socially approved deviance rather than nondeviant according to the original definition.

Definition of Terms

Beliefs: Statements about reality that are accepted as true. Beliefs form the basic structure of the individual's conception of the world. They are shared ideas concerning the nature of the universe or any of its component parts, including man.

Culture: "That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871: 1). Culture provides patterns, both explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour, acquired and transmitted by symbols; traditional ideas and their attached values; a framework of beliefs consisting of values and norms; and an organized group of learned responses characteristic of a society.

Dominant Culture: "The structures and meanings which most adequately reflect the position and interests of the most powerful class . . . will stand in relation to all the others, as a dominant social-cultural order. The dominant culture represents itself as the culture. It tries to define and contain all other cultures within its inclusive range. Its views of the world, unless challenged, will stand as the most natural, all-embracing, universal culture" (Clarke et al., 1975: 12).

Hegemony: "An order in which a certain way of life and thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society in all its institutional and private manifestations, informing with its spirit all taste, morality, customs, religious and political principles, and all social relations, particularly in their intellectual and moral connotations" (Williams as quoted in Cammett, 1967: 204).

Ideology: A system of inderdependent ideas (beliefs, traditions, principles, myths) held by a social group or society, which reflects, rationalizes, and defends its particular social, moral, religious, political and economic institutional interests and commitments. Ideology serves as the logical and philosophical justification for a group's patterns of behaviour, as well as its attitudes, goals, and general life situation.

Interactionism: A sociological perspective emphasizing the action and reaction of persons and groups to each other, and the expectations and influences of people on each other. Such an approach is concerned with social norms and social roles as explanations of human behaviour.

Norms: Rules or standards of behaviour defined by shared expectations of two or more people regarding what behaviour is to be considered socially acceptable. Social norms provide guidelines to the range of behaviour appropriate and applicable to particular social situations. They may be studied by observing overt behaviour as well as by observing what people say their norms are. Norms are generally accepted sanctioned prescriptions for, or prohibitions against, various types of behaviour.

Society: A group of people with a common and at least somewhat distinctive culture who occupy a particular territorial area, have a feeling of unity, and regard themselves as a disting-

uishable entity. Like all groups, a society has a structure of interrelated roles with proper role behaviour prescribed by social norms. A society has a comprehensive social system that includes all of the basic social institutions required to meet basic human needs.

Sport: "Involving activities having formally recorded histories and traditions, stressing physical exertion through competition within limits set in explicit and formal rules governing role and position relationships, and carried out by actors who represent or are part of formally organized associations having the goal of achieving valued tangibles or intangibles through defeating opposing groups" (Edwards, 1973: 57-58).

Symbols: Arbitrary signs that evoke a uniform response. The meaning is arbitrary in the sense that it is not inherent in the sound, object, or event, but is derived from the common learning and consensus of the people who use it in communication. A symbol may be any shared act or object that has socially come to be accepted as standing for something else.

Values: Abstract, generalized principles of behaviour to which the members of a group feel a strong, emotionally toned positive commitment and which provide a standard for judging specific acts and goals. They are accepted not merely as overt statements to which each group member assents, but as the individual commitment of each member, who has internalized them in the process of socialization. Values provide the gener-

alized standards of behaviour that are expressed in more specific, concrete form in social norms.

III

SPORT IN SOCIETY: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The sociological investigation of sport can be better informed by a macro-sociological analysis of the place of sport in society. Such an analysis must investigate the relationship between sport and the dominant culture, and the interrelationships between the social institution of sport and other societal institutions should also be examined. In this chapter, the place and role of sport in contemporary society is reviewed, and an attempt is made to ascertain whether the dominant values in sport are supportive of, or at variance with, the dominant ideology of the larger society. The literature pertaining to sports subcultures is also examined, as is the literature pertaining to the rugby subculture in particular.

Sport in Contemporary Society

Before any examination of the relationship between sport and the dominant culture in American post-industrial society is embarked upon, an attempt should be made to assess the significance of sport within that context. In his perceptive journalistic account of the phenomenon, Boyle claims that:

> Sport permeates any number of levels of contemporary society, and it touches upon and even deeply influences such disparate elements as status, race relations, business life, automotive design, clothing styles, the concept of hero, language, and ethical values (1963: 3-4).

There is little doubt that sport has developed on an extraordinarily wide scale during recent decades, and as Maheu (1963) has suggested, it is one aspect of modern life which is widely encountered throughout the world in both industrial societies and in developing nations. According to Sage:

> Sport is such a pervasive human activity that to ignore it is to overlook one of the most significant aspects of contemporary American society. It is a social phenomenon which extends into education, politics, economics, art, the mass media, and even international diplomatic relations (1974: 5).

It would not be difficult to substantiate Sage's claim (cf. Kiviaho, 1973; Page, 1973; Snyder, 1974; Lüschen, 1975). Sport, certainly, is firmly entrenched within the American education system (see e.g. Coleman, 1961a, 1961b; Henry, 1963; Schafer, 1971a), and the interrelationships between sport and art, economics, and the mass media have frequently been examined (see e.g. Maheu, 1962; Wenkert, 1963; Jokl, 1964; Elias and Dunning, 1970; Durso, 1971; Furst, 1971; Demmert, 1973; Edwards, 1973; Johnson, 1973; Nixon, 1974; Noll; 1974; Keenan, 1975). The relationship between sport, politics and international relations, however, raises a much more controversial issue. That there has been a long tradition that sport is essentially an apolitical institution can hardly be denied, but the continued acceptance of such a belief can surely be shown to be erroneous (see e.g. Orwell, 1945; Banham, 1965; White, 1965; Heinilä, 1966; Bouet, 1968; Critchley, 1972; N. Levine, 1972). As Voigt points out:

> That sports are linked with politics is to say that the state cannot be separated from any institutional context. As the state is bound to our lives, so our lives are bound to the state, and the structural pattern of this relationship needs to be surveyed (1974: 131).

Similarly, Lüschen (1975) has commented on the political significance of

sport, and suggests that it is an important indicator of the overall achievement of political systems and societies (cf. McIntosh, 1966; Meynaud, 1966).

If we are to fully understand the phenomenon of sport in contemporary society, we must be concerned with the relationship between the ideological characteristics of sport and those expressed in the dominant culture. In suggesting that games and culture are interdependent, Caillois maintained that such activities serve "to define the society's moral or intellectual character, provide proof of its precise meaning, and contribute to its popular acceptance by accentuating the relevant qualities" (1961: 82). Consequently:

> we might expect that ludic activities (play, games, and sport) reflect the prevalent ideology while sustaining the myths of the past. Evidence that this is indeed the case can be obtained from historical studies (Ingham et al., 1972: 258).

According to Gruneau (1975), the professionalization and rationalization of sport has led to the adoption of characteristics that are ideologically compatible with the society. He maintains that "the history of sport in the western industrial societies has been a history of its association with the changing social conditions of the capitalist industrial complex" (1976a: 19). It becomes necessary, therefore, to examine the characteristics of the dominant ideology of contemporary society, to determine whether this ideology is also reflected in the social institution of sport.

Thio maintains that the dominant values in American society are related to the success ideology (cf. Merton, 1957; Williams, 1960) which functions to maintain the capitalistic mode of production:

> the subordinate strata of American society are subtly

> coerced in various ways to conform to the success ideology in the forms of (1) the subscription to a high level of aspirations for success and (2) the support of the success ideology that there are in the society abundant opportunities for all (1974: 14).

Thio suggests that "the mass media, the public school systems, and other kindred institutions are involved in propagating the value of high aspirations of material success" (1974: 15). There are many who would claim that one such kindred institution is sport. In examining the role of the school in the transmission of values and ideology, Sexton emphasizes the part that sport plays in stimulating the success ideology:

> The team game may be both creator and creation of Western organization man, combining almost all elements of the achievement syndrome . . . . . While games may distract some youths from academic pursuits, they perform . . . a vital role in socializing the young (1967: 82).

In similar vein, Martin and Berry (1974) claim that patterns of sport are reflective and resonant of, as well as functionally related to, deeper cultural values and institutional commitments (cf. Frederickson, 1960; Schwartz, 1973; Voigt, 1976).

Petrie argues that the ideological significance of sport has often been overlooked or consciously ignored:

> Sport is an element of social reality, strongly anchored to the political-economic system in which it is placed, that has significance far beyond the trivial. It provides a means of underlining and exhibiting the major elements of the ideological base of the power structure of society (1975: 190).

This notion is also posited by Althusser (1971) in his examination of the ways in which the ruling class ensures its domination over the less privileged elements in society. Althusser argues that certain social institutions function as effective vehicles in the realm of socialization and social control. The socializee is exposed to, and ultimately accepts, the

ideology or cultural values espoused by the dominant class in society. Sport, in Althusser's opinion, is one example of such an institution, and historical precedents for such an argument are not difficult to identify. Spring (1974) suggests that contemporary sports, by occupying the leisure time of the masses, serve to dilute political consciousness and diffuse feelings of rebellion (cf. Brohm, 1972; Hoch, 1972). In such a way, sports can be considered one of the controlling instruments of the technological culture.

As Spring notes, however:

> What is important to realize . . . is that these goals were implied in the intentions of those who provided the ideological arguments for support of modern recreational movements and the development of athletics in the public schools and universities in the United States (1974: 483).

Spring maintains that the ideology which supported the growth of sport in America was based on the grounds that sport would act as an "opiate" for the lack of job satisfaction in an industrial society, would end social disorder and crime, and would provide a "proper" use of leisure time.

There is nothing novel in the suggestion of sport being useful as a social control mechanism (see e.g. Coleman, 1960, 1961a; Vaz, 1967; McIntosh, 1971; Stern, 1971). In his perceptive analysis of the role of sport in the schools, Waller described athletics as "the most flourishing and revered culture pattern" (1932: 112). He suggested that sport was most useful as a mechanism for enhancing the unity and solidarity of schools (cf. Albonico, 1967; Lewis, 1970; Spring, 1972), as a means of channeling the interest and energies of problem children into more acceptable patterns of behaviour, and as a means of disseminating attitudes favourable to the authorities. Thus, "athletics may simplify the problem

of police work in the school. The group of athletes may be made to furnish a very useful extension of the faculty-controlled social order" (Waller, 1932: 116).

A similar viewpoint has been expressed by Schafer, who contends that:

> whatever else their outcomes, interscholastic athletics serve first and foremost as a social device for steering young people . . . into the mainstream of American life through the overt and covert teaching of "appropriate" attitudes, values, norms, and behavior patterns (1971a: 6).

This position has been adopted by several other writers (see e.g. Hoch, 1972; Kenyon, 1972; Petrie, 1975), all emphasizing that the cultural values expressed in sport are a clear reflection of the dominant ideology in American society. Consequently, as Edwards emphasizes, any attack upon sport is often interpreted as an "attack upon the fundamental way of life of that society as manifest in the value orientations it emphasizes through sport" (1973: 90). A classic example of such a reaction is Rafferty's proclamation that:

> There are two great national institutions which simply cannot tolerate either internal dissension or external interference: our armed forces and our interscholastic sports program. Both are of necessity benevolent dictatorships because by their very nature they cannot be otherwise (1971: 14).

What concerns Rafferty, and others of his persuasion, is that any criticism of the values expressed in sport represents a fundamental criticism of the dominant values in American society, and the evidence would support such an interpretation.

The Role of Sport in Society

That play, games, and sport have an important role in the sociali-

zation process has long been recognized, and the importance of such activities for early socialization experiences has occupied the interests of sociologists, social psychologists and psychologists since the turn of the century (see e.g. Groos, 1901; Cooley, 1922; Mead, 1934; Huizinga, 1949; Piaget, 1962; Stone, 1965; Herron and Sutton-Smith, 1971). Mead (1934) considered the elements of play vital to the successful socialization of children. By participating in games and working for a common goal, children assume the morale of the society and become essential members of it. Lüschen (1967) has commented on the role of sport in society, and maintains that sport functions in accordance with cultural imperatives. Following Parsons' (1966) model, Lüschen argues that these imperatives must be met if societal needs are to be satisfied. If sport is to be supportive of dominant cultural values, it must emphasize adaptation, pattern-maintenance, goal-attainment and integration, and Lüschen suggests that this is indeed the case. As Sutton-Smith has remarked, "Play and games are much less carefree and trivial than puritanic thought has implied. They are all too tightly bound to the cultural situation of the players" (1971a: 98).

According to Levy (1952), children's participation in competitive sport is of considerable importance because these activities have essential functions for socialization, integration and general reinforcement of the dominant social structure. Ritchie and Koller (1964) claim that games involve attitudes, values, norms, roles and skills which are similar to those found in adult work activities, while similar observations have been made by Lindesmith and Strauss (1964) concerning the role of games in the learning of social skills required for participation in adult society (cf. McPherson, 1976). Berne (1964) maintains that people consistently play out certain games in their interpersonal relationships. While many of these

games are informal and unconscious, they nevertheless have a structure of roles and rules. The culture, according to Berne, plays an important part in determining the selection of games which then condition the individual to accept and use the values and attitudes of his culture.

In their extensive evaluation of the role of play, games and sport in the socialization process, Ingham et al. maintain that these activities may be viewed simultaneously as process and agent:

> Games provide definitions of meaningful interaction which may have transfer to other life situations. Ludic action is an agent in that other agencies of socialization (i.e. family, school) see it as a way of portraying culture to the child (1972: 242).

Sutton-Smith observes that "studies of devoted game players in our own culture show that they . . . seem to be molded by their games, they don't just 'play' them" (1971a: 83), again indicating the role of such activities in our society. In an extension of this view, Ingham and Loy (1971) present a schematic discussion of how involvement in play inculcates specific values (cf. Piaget, 1965), and draw attention to similarities in the construction of "play-worlds" and "life-worlds." Without doubt, there is overwhelming consensus that play, games and sports have a vital role in the socialization process and function to enculturate the participants into the dominant ideology of the society (see e.g. Helanko, 1957, 1958, 1966, 1969; Cowell, 1960; Ulrich, 1968; Sessoms, 1969; Andrews; 1970; Snyder, 1970; Wohl, 1970; Loy and Ingham, 1973; Ciuciu, 1974; Schafer, 1975). As Schwartz puts it, sports "continue both to reaffirm major values for adults . . . and to serve as a socializing agent for each generation of new citizens into the integral values, norms, and roles of our culture" (1973: 39).

Cultural Analyses of Sport

Riesman and Denney (1951) have commented on the part played by football in the ethnic, class and life-style struggles during various periods of time in American history. They point out that American football in the nineteenth century changed from rugby to an entirely different game, and suggest that this occurred because the game was transplanted into a culture idealizing different values. As Duthie comments:

> It is by no accident that American football when compared with Rugby football, is seen to be end- rather than means-directed, with the importance of goal-success as opposed to player-centered activity, accentuated (1971: 1).

These changes in the game, according to Duthie, reflected the greater achievement orientation in American society. In assessing the development and changes in football throughout the years, Riesman and Denney present a convincing argument to support the notion that the game has been used as a significant device for the acculturation of immigrants into American society.

Similarly, Daly (1971) has argued that the values embodied in Australian sport represent a significant modification to the original sense and purpose of these games in their British origin. The "noble bushman" ethos which permeated Australian society found an ideal avenue of expression in sport:

> The values idealized in the bushman myth -- mateship, egalitarianism, courage, tough masculinity -- could be and were transplanted into sporting patterns. Thus Australian sport became an expression of this ethos . . . for it was (and to a certain extent still is) in sport that the Australian attempted to live up to his "national mystique" (1971: 58).

In emphasizing the interdependence of sport and the wider social structure,

Daly provides evidence that sport and games have been imbued with a distinctive system of values which are a part of Australian society. Indeed, Denney maintains that "Australia leads the world in the degree to which its sport interests and sports organizations reflect the total social and political ideals of the nation," noting in addition that the United States has also "continued the British tradition of associating sports closely with the whole class and political texture of the society" (1957: 127).

Glassford (1970) is another who has examined the relationship between sport and the dominant value system in society. In his investigation of the structure of games in the Canadian Eskimo culture, he maintains that "the games of the traditional Canadian Eskimo tended to reflect the maximin, cooperative patterns of organization that tended to prevail within their culture" (1970: 81). Hye-Kerkdal (1956) has commented on the tight structural relationship between the log races of the Brazilian Timbira and the socio-cultural system of the tribe. The competition is ritualistic and has considerable symbolic meaning for tribal organization:

> It . . . is so strongly imbedded in this religious-dominated system that winning or losing does not have any effect on the status of the team . . . Yet these races are performed vigorously and with effort (Lüschen, 1967: 130).

In his superb sociological analysis of a dart match in Tikopia, Firth (1930) examines the significance of this game in the Polynesian culture in which it was played. He provides not only a detailed description of the game, but analyzes the songs and general emotional background of the game in order to account for "the interest it possesses for the native and the importance attached to winning and losing" (1930: 94). While the thrill of the game itself, the joy of competition, and the desire for self-assertion are important, Firth emphasizes that:

> the game of tika comes to pass beyond the bounds of simple play for exercise and relaxation, and to attain considerable importance in the general economic and religious life, in addition to its reactions on the social organization of the community (1930: 95).

Studies of the structure and meaning of games and sports in varying cultures add further support to the contention that there is an interdependent relationship between the ideological characteristics of such activities and the ideological characteristics of the culture in which they occur (see e.g. Dunlap, 1951; Sutton-Smith, 1951; Brewster, 1956; Mistry, 1958; Read, 1959; James, 1963; Zurcher and Meadow, 1967; Avedon and Sutton-Smith, 1971; Geertz, 1972; Kiviaho, 1973; Clignet and Stark, 1974; Salamone, 1974; Lapchick, 1975).

Cultural Values and Sport: Empirical Research

In a series of studies conducted by Roberts and Sutton-Smith (see e.g. Roberts et al., 1959; Roberts and Sutton-Smith, 1962, 1966; Sutton-Smith et al., 1963), the researchers developed a conflict-enculturation model, based initially on an examination of the predominant game forms and cultural characteristics of primitive cultures, and later extended to the area of childhood socialization and adult involvement in sport. In brief, the model implies that certain child-training practices induce conflict in children. Play and games help to assuage this conflict, and through participation in such activities an opportunity is provided for the child to be successfully enculturated into the dominant ideology of the society. Sutton-Smith and Roberts have further speculated that:

> in games children learn all those necessary arts of trickery, deception, harassment, divination, and foul play . . . that are most important in successful human interrelationships in marriage,

business and war (1970: 107).

The assumption that children learn appropriate sex-role behaviour through games (see e.g. Sutton-Smith and Gump, 1955; Rosenberg and Sutton-Smith, 1964) has also been the subject of empirical investigation. In their extensive examination of the historical change in game preferences amongst children, Sutton-Smith and Rosenberg note that the increasing similarity in game preferences amongst the sexes is to be expected "in light of the well known changes in women's role in American culture during this period of time" (1961: 31).

Webb (1969) has specifically examined the role of sport in enculturating the participants into the dominant ideology of the society. In his investigation of the "professionalization" of children's attitudes towards play, Webb argued that sport provides us with a clear reflection of the "inviolate trinity" or ideological commitment of Western post-industrial society by emphasizing the values of fairness, skill and victory (or success). As the child's activities become more rationalized, there is a concomitant change in attitude (professionalization) progressing from an emphasis on fairness to one on skill and success. According to Webb, it is "precisely this change which makes possible later effective participation in the economy" (1969: 163). He maintains that experiences in organized sport influence the development of attitudes appropriate to a society maintaining universalistic criteria in its major institutions, and games and sport make a substantial contribution to committed and effective participation in the dominant culture.

Mantel and Vander Velden (1971) have provided substantial corroboration of Webb's findings. Their research indicated that participants in organized sport emphasized skill or victory, whereas nonparticipants em-

phasized fairness as the most important factor in play (cf. Feldman, 1969; Maloney and Petrie, 1972). In a further extension to Webb's study, Petrie (1971a) hypothesized that male college students would be likely to support participation in physical activities which were achievement oriented, and thus closely aligned to the achievement criteria incorporated in the economic sector of society. Female students, on the other hand, would be more likely to support activities which incorporate those values inherent in their major adult sex role. Petrie's results led him to conclude that:

> male socialization is directed toward the incorporation of values of importance in the economic sector of adult life, and that these values are carried over into play and game situations during adolescence (1971a: 97).

His hypothesis concerning female students was also upheld, with greater support being provided for motivational and value statements which stressed the intrinsic satisfactions of play, and which were in line with the expectations associated with the adult female sex role. Consequently, Petrie asserts that the results provide strong support "for the belief that attitudes toward play and games mirror values inherent in the major sex roles of the adult members of society (1971a: 97).

In his provocative analysis of the relationship between war, sports and aggression, Sipes (1973) concluded that cross-culturally, war and combative sports show a direct positive relationship. He maintained that the claim that these sports act as alternative channels for the controlled discharge of aggression is unwarranted. Sipes believes that "rather than being functional alternatives war and combative sports activities in a society appear to be components of a broader cultural pattern" (1973: 80). The explicit significance of Sipes' work is the suggestion that warlike societies are more likely to indulge in combative sports, as both are

components of a dominant cultural theme.

Blanchard has pursued Sipes' hypothesis in his examination of the function of team sports "relative to the broader realities of conflict, aggression, and violence, in specific cultural situations" (1975b: 1). Based on several empirical studies (see e.g. Blanchard, 1974a, 1974b, 1975a), he concludes that conflict in sport is culture-specific and structurally defined. The violent behaviour, according to Blanchard, can only be explained with reference to the cultural setting in which it occurs, and such a thesis has other recent support (see e.g. Smith, 1971).

Sach's (1972) examination of the relationship between American business values and sport provides a further illustration of the interdependence of sport and the dominant value structure of society. In attempting to explain the domination of Harvard football teams by Yale during the latter part of the nineteenth century, Sach maintained that competing ideologies at the two schools concerning the role of sport stemmed directly from differing world views:

> These divergent value systems . . . contained markedly different conceptions of sport in general and of college football in particular. At Harvard, just as among the British aristocracy, sport was viewed as an essential aspect of a well bred gentleman's education. At Yale, on the other hand, football became highly competitive and functioned to reinforce the values of America's rising business class (1972: 286).

Whereas athletic competition at Harvard mirrored the value system of the New England aristocracy, sport at Yale provided a clear reflection of the new industrial, commercial and competitive ethic of the America of that period.

An examination of sports literature (both biographical and fictional) adds a further dimension to research into the interdependence of sport

and the dominant culture. Haerle maintains that while social scientists have traditionally explored social institutions such as "the family, the economy, and the polity in their efforts to uncover the dominant values that circulate throughout a society and influence the behaviour of its people" (1974: 392), they have ignored the potential of sport as a major focus of societal values. In his analysis of selected sports biographies and autobiographies, Haerle claims that the emphasis on teamwork in these works at the turn of the century has been replaced by a reaffirmation of individualism, and that "this is not a chance occurrence, for the trend is undoubtedly due to large scale societal movements" (1974: 398).

Following Levine's claim that certain institutions "have as a prime purpose the reinforcement of the most sacred values of the culture" (1972: 139), Haerle asserts that sport is one of the institutions which performs this valuable function for the society at large:

> success and failure, the individual versus the group, the ultimate nature of man, the need for social order and social control -- these and similar issues are constantly tested on the field of play . . . . In this manner are the basic cultural values, the so-called "sacred beliefs," constantly reinforced (1974: 399).

With reference to sports fiction, Lowe and Payne (1974) found a similar pattern. The role of the sports heroes in such stories "is only important insofar as the values that they lived by either reflect a prevailing societal ethos of the times or set a moral pattern for the young to emulate" (1974: 383). Similar analyses of sports fiction would seem to substantiate this claim (see e.g. Evans, 1972). The sports hero, both fact and fiction, serves as a symbol for the aspirations of his culture (cf. Marshall, 1958; Edmonds, 1973) and the basic values of his society (cf. Weiss, 1969).

In summary, there is overwhelming evidence to suggest that the ideological characteristics and value structure of sport are in harmony with those of the dominant culture, and that there is a demonstrable positive relationship between the social institution of sport and other major societal institutions. There is tremendous support for the notion that sport has a vital role to play in socializing participants into the dominant ideology of the society, and this is supported by cross-cultural analyses and empirical research. Sport is a highly significant phenomenon and a highly valued activity in contemporary American society. As such, it might be expected that society's attitudes towards sportsmen and their behaviour may be influenced by preconceptions concerning the role, significance, value, and effects of sport within the culture.

Subcultures in Sport

In order to examine more closely the relationship between the value characteristics of sport and those of the dominant culture, it has been suggested that the concept of sports subcultures merits considerable attention. The attempt to apply the concept of subculture to the world of sport in order to determine the characteristics of a generalized sports subculture has been limited to comparatively recent studies (see e.g. Schafer, 1970; Phillips and Schafer, 1971a, 1971b; Snyder, 1973). The subculture of the sporting world is as evident as are the distinctive subcultures of "blue-collar hardhats" and "ghetto delinquents," but while "a large body of sociological literature tells us a good deal about the lifestyles of diverse occupations . . . the comparable literature on sportsmen and their culture is skimpy" (Page, 1973: 35).

The specific interest generated by research into a generalized

sports subculture is that the concept provides a way of examining and explaining the behaviour of athletes both on and off the sports field. With reference to high school sports, Schafer explains it in this way:

> Participation . . . appears to exert an influence toward conformity with the standards of conduct and achievement defined by authorities of the school and the community as desirable; and one important way this influence occurs is through a distinguishable and relatively powerful subculture shared by athletes (1970: 1).

What Schafer suggests is that the sports subculture in American high schools, largely through the authority and control of the coach, is a powerful social control mechanism which effectively socializes athletes into patterns of behaviour which are deemed desirable by adult authorities and by the dominant culture (cf. Petrie, 1971b; Snyder, 1973). As Matza has commented, athletes are "enjoined to be 'in training'; they are to refrain from smoking, drinking, staying out late, and other forms of dissipation which violate the expectations of adult authority" (1964b: 205).

There is considerable research to suggest that there are differences between athletes and nonathletes on numerous dimensions (see e.g. Eidsmoe, 1963; Schendel, 1965; Rehberg and Schafer, 1968; Schafer and Armer, 1968; Puretz, 1969; Schafer, 1969; Schafer and Rehberg, 1970; Spreitzer and Pugh, 1973). Snyder comments that the "explanation for some of these differences between athletes and non-athletes is based on the unique socialization of the athlete as he interacts with coaches and other players in the athletic subculture" (1972a: 1).

Possible negative effects of the athletic subculture have also received considerable attention. According to Schafer (1970), the subculture exerts influences which promote intergroup and interpersonal intolerance, an unquestioning following of authority, an uncritical accep-

tance of the status quo, a general disinterest in public affairs, and an unduly selfish interpretation of social problems (cf. Schafer, 1969, 1971a, 1971b; Phillips and Schafer, 1971a; Hoch, 1972; Petrie, 1971b, 1975; Edwards, 1973; Snyder, 1973; Malmisur and Schmitt, 1975).

Phillips and Schafer argue strongly for an examination of this generalized sports subculture:

> It would seem likely that with their special patterns of interaction, sports related activities, and sports related role expectations, athletes in various sports might develop patterns of symbols, meaning, beliefs, norms and values shared among athletes but not with non-athletes (1971b: 1).

Research into sports subcultures indicates, however, that while they may contain many common characteristics, they also contain several readily identifiable differences (see e.g. Weinberg and Arond, 1952; Boroff, 1964; Irwin, 1965; Stone and Oldenburg, 1967; Scott, 1968; Polsky, 1969; Mahigel and Stone, 1971; Steele, 1971; Arnold; 1972; Furst, 1972; Faulkner, 1973; Pearson, 1974; Jacobs, 1976). Toffler has discussed the rapid growth of <u>distinct</u> subcultures associated with games and sports:

> Surfers are only one of many such play-based subcults . . . . Skydivers have their own little world, as do glider enthusiasts, scuba-divers, hot-rodders, drag racers and motorcyclists. Each of these represents a leisure-based subcult (1971: 289).

Consequently, subcultural analysis in sport may more effectively be achieved when it is applied to specific groups, rather than attempting to examine the behaviour of athletes at a more generalized level. Arnold argues that "to develop a sociology of subcultures we need case studies to provide the data needed for generalizing to a middle range theory of subcultures" (1972: 1), and that specific sports subcultures not only provide convenient cases for the sociology of subcultures, but have con-

siderable sociological importance in and of themselves.

With respect to deviant behaviour in sports subcultures, the focus of attention has seldom been placed on the behaviour of athletes in a non-sport situation. What evidence there is available, in the form of auto-biographies and biographies of former athletes in various sports, would seem to suggest that deviant behaviour is not uncommon (see e.g. Bouton, 1971; Meggyesy, 1971; Wolf, 1972; Mathews, 1974). Sheard and Dunning (1973) have provided one of the only studies which focuses on the behaviour of athletes off the sports field, and their analysis of the rugby football subculture in England presents considerable evidence pointing towards "traditions of deviance" within that subculture.

One aspect of sports subcultures which has some relevance to this investigation is the place of women within the differing subcultures. In the boxing subculture, women are virtually ignored, and in some instances specifically rejected. "Some [fighters] insist that if a woman watches them train, it is bad luck" (Weinberg and Arond, 1952: 463-464). In Scott's (1968) description of the jockey's world, no reference is made to women, while skydivers actively discriminate against them (cf. Arnold, 1972). In the skiing subculture, discrimination against women instructors is apparent and stereotyping common (cf. Boroff, 1964; Bellavance and Bellavance, 1972).

With reference to the subculture of surf life savers in Australia and New Zealand, Pearson (1974) quotes McGregor who claims that "the surf life clubs are the last citadels of unrepentant masculinity" (1968: 298), and it would appear that the world of the bowling hustler is similarly a masculine preserve (cf. Steele, 1971). In his superb analysis of pool-rooms, Polsky asserts that:

> poolrooms were the exact center and veritable stronghold of a special kind of subculture that has become increasingly rare and unimportant in America -- the heterosexual but all-male subculture, which required that certain gathering places . . . serve as sacrosanct refuges from women (1969: 21).

According to Tiger, there is a biologically transmitted propensity for human males to form all-male groups, and that "male bonding" is a species-specific pattern which has "become part of the biological infrastructure of man" (1970: 41). Tiger suggests reasons for the development of such a pattern:

> specialization for hunting widened the gap between the behaviour of males and females. It favoured those 'genetic packages' which arranged matters so that males hunted co-operatively in groups while females engaged in maternal and some gathering activity (1970: 44).

Tiger suggests that male bonding patterns exist among other animals, in particular the primates, and these patterns appear to be programmed in some manner. It is feasible, therefore, according to Tiger, to suggest that comparable biological influences are responsible for the human male bonding so common in contemporary society, especially with regard to the major social institutions. While Tiger presents a highly provocative hypothesis, there is considerable debate as to whether the mechanisms associated with the formation of all-male groups are biological or social in nature. While the issues will not be debated here, it may be premature to support one position to the exclusion of the other.

In turning our attention to the subject of this present inquiry, it will be seen that some significance has been attributed to the question of male-female relationships in society with regard to development of the rugby subculture, and this common thread which appears to run through numerous sports subcultures would seem to merit considerable attention.

The Rugby Subculture

With regard to the development of the rugby subculture in England in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Sheard and Dunning reject Tiger's (1970) thesis in favour of social factors in their attempt to explain the emergence of the subculture:

> There can be little doubt that the processes involved in the initial emergence and subsequent transformation of rugby football as a male preserve were social process sui generis (1973: 12).

According to the authors, rugby football developed as an adults' game at a time when significant demands were being made by women for a more equal distribution of power in politics and economics. The suffragette movement, based as it was on the upper and middle classes, drew its membership from the same social strata as did the rugby clubs of this period. The threat to masculinity posed by such women was instrumental in the development of rugby football as a "male preserve" in which the members "could bolster up their threatened masculinity and, at the same time, mock, objectify and vilify women, the principal source of the threat" (Sheard and Dunning, 1973: 12).

Sheard and Dunning describe in some detail the development and subsequent modification of the subculture that became such a significant aspect of the game of rugby. It seems evident that not only has the sport itself been adopted by other nations, but that the subculture, too, has been transplanted into other cultures in very similar form (see e.g. McElroy, 1971; Laidlaw, 1973). With regard to the literature concerning the sport in America today, McElroy has examined the norms, values and other characteristics of rugby players as a specific group, and is of the opinion that "much qualitative data appears to support the subculture

hypothesis" (1971: 5). There is sufficient evidence in McElroy's analysis to indicate that an identifiable rugby subculture exists in America, and that this subculture is worthy of more intensive examination.

According to McElroy, new players become socialized into the rugby subculture through frequent interaction with the established members, especially where such interaction is separated from the influence of the larger society to some degree (cf. Sutherland, 1940). Using the techniques of participant observation, McElroy observed all pre-game and post-game locker room interaction during the rugby season, while informal observations at parties and other events provided additional information:

> Observations verify the frequent interactions. Not only did players spend much of the game day together, but they also engaged in other joint activities such as team practices, parties, and other gatherings. Most of these activities were clearly separated from the university culture as a whole (1971: 4).

In analyzing some of the characteristics which set the rugby subculture apart from the university culture and from other sports groups, McElroy notes that the value placed on success within the subculture appears to run counter to the expected value system. He maintains that although the players value winning, the ultimate value is placed on "playing good rugby," and this attitude, a continuation of the English rugby tradition, does not appear to have survived in American football (cf. Riesman and Denney, 1951).

Other subcultural characteristics were also observed by McElroy, some of which were common to other sports groups but counter to the university culture. A specific belief system was also noticeable, as was a specialized argot containing "many words that had meaning only for rugby players" (1971: 5), and institutionalized ceremonies before and after

the game were common. In addition, while new members were slow in internalizing the rules of the game, they quickly adapted their behaviour to conform with subcultural expectations. As McElroy notes, "despite the lack of a formal socializing agent . . . veterans, who perceived new players as misbehaving, applied subtle, yet efficient pressures for conformity" (1971: 6).

McElroy's analysis of the rugby subculture led him to conclude that the "seasonal aspect suggests that the subculture of sport functions only during the season" (1971: 1). Accordingly, he classifies the rugby subculture as seasonal in that its existence is regulated by temporal factors. However, while the sport and team may not be a functioning entity between seasons, the subculture itself may continue to exist, and a more extensive examination of the subculture rather than the sport may support this contention. In concentrating on the behaviour of players on the field, and their attitudes, values and norms concerning the game itself, McElroy has been able to identify several subcultural characteristics. These latter may be even more evident, however, if the non-sport situations of the subculture are given greater attention.

With regard to the off-the-field behaviour of members of the rugby subculture, Sheard and Dunning (1973) claim that rugby players have a reputation for regularly violating accepted norms and standards of behaviour, and that deviant behaviour has become an integral feature of the subculture. They specifically examine the "normative" violation of taboos, "especially those regarding violence, physical contact, nakedness, drunkenness, and the treatment of property" (1973: 5), and make the claim that such behaviour tends to take a highly ritualized form. The subculture which developed off the field of play featured behaviour which appears

to have offended against the "every day" standards of the social strata from which the players themselves were drawn. Sheard and Dunning describe this behaviour and attempt to explain the pressures which drove the participants toward violation of their "every day" norms.

As was indicated earlier, Sheard and Dunning believe that the relationship between the emergence of the rugby subculture and the rise of the suffragette movement is highly significant. The movement constituted a threat to the masculinity of males in the upper and middle classes, and the rugby subculture provided one of the few "sacrosanct refuges from women" where men could bolster their threatened feelings in the company of other men. This thesis clearly reflects Cohen's earlier assertion that subcultures arise through the existence, in effective interaction with one another, of actors with similar problems of adjustment" (1955: 59).

Some of the concessions forced upon men at this time included the opening of the doors to former all-male preserves, such as the music hall. One of the characteristics of the early nineteenth century music hall was the performance of obscene songs (cf. Bloch, 1936). Such performances became less acceptable, however, as the suffragettes forced entry into these previously segregated institutions. As Sheard and Dunning point out, once women gained entry to such places, "manners changed and behaviour began to become more refined (and) less 'masculine' in terms of prevailing existing standards" (1973: 13). With less opportunity for women to enter the rugby clubs, however, "the obscene song tradition could be perpetuated and . . . the threat posed to men by increasingly powerful women would be rendered symbolically harmless" (1973: 13).

The obscene song tradition appears still to be an essential feature

of the rugby subculture. According to McCarthy, sexual themes make up a large part of the traditional song fare in England, and an even larger percentage of the traditional music hall was bawdy, but rugby songs "are exceptional in that the entire repertoire is scatalogical or based on sex" (1970: 550). Rugby songs also differ in their treatment of the sexual theme. While traditional songs are mainly concerned with the social aspects of sexual activity, the rugby songs are highly technical:

> They are concerned with methods, performances and accidents. Beyond that, they deal not with people, but with grotesques; the subjects are ten-foot genitals, monstrous pubic hairs, astonishing feats of endurance, ladies insatiable even with mechanical aids (McCarthy, 1970: 550).

The vilification of women, and a general attitude of "woman as object" seems common to the rugby subculture in countries other than England as well. As Laidlaw comments, women are:

> sometimes taken, sometimes left, they are a commodity to be utilized only if instantly available and free, which they usually are, in considerable plentitude. The sex scene on Rugby tours is a women's liberationists nightmare. The ladies are but objects of fleeting pleasure to be consumed as quickly as possible once the drinks have run out (1973: 58).

It could well be argued, of course, that such an attitude is typical of most touring male sports teams, irrespective of the nature of the sport, and other characteristics of the rugby subculture are also prominent in various specific sports subcultures.

A noticeable feature of the rugby subculture in England is that "everyday" norms are distinctly contravened rather than merely relaxed. Sheard and Dunning observe that the male "strip-tease" became a firmly institutionalized part of the rugby subculture and that "the singing of a song entitled 'the Zulu Warrior' became the traditional signal for a

ritualistic strip by a member of the group" (1973: 7). Initiation ceremonies also involved the compulsory stripping of the initiate. Such behaviour, according to Sheard and Dunning, provides an explanation for another characteristic of the subculture which is apparent in the obscene song tradition -- that of mocking homosexuals and homosexuality. The all-male environment, this "very close, affectionate gathering of males who bathe together, strip in all-male company, and generally indulge in what may appear to be homo-erotic behaviour" (1973: 15), needs to convincingly portray a determinedly heterosexual orientation. Consequently, the obscene songs of the subculture symbolically express a denunciation of homosexuality.

Sheard and Dunning also claim that with the concern for masculinity so prominent within the subculture it is not surprising that beer drinking is firmly established in the tradition of the rugby club:

> As early as 1893, The Cambrian reported a speech by a Mr. Michael Craven in which he stated that rugby football was "the fascination of the devil and twin sister of the drinking system and that without the latter it would have a job to succeed" (1973: 16).

That such a tradition has been maintained is strongly suggested by Morgan and Nicholson who claim that "the schoolboys who are boldest at going into pubs for a beer are so often . . . the best [rugby] footballers that the amateur sociologist could be forgiven for hazarding a bit of cause and effect" (1959: 26). A similar observation, however, has been made by Hollingshead in his analysis of an American midwestern community: "Drinking on Saturday night is more widespread in the athletic crowd both during and after training than in any other group in the high school" (1949: 323). Obviously, drinking is not restricted to the rugby subculture but may well be regarded as a central characteristic of many male sports subcultures.

Nevertheless, drinking appears to be a dominant characteristic in the rugby subculture.

Laidlaw provides a confirmation of established patterns of heavy drinking within the rugby subculture in New Zealand:

> Whether in bottle, carton or jar, whether before training, after training, before dinner or after it, the beer is thrown down by the gallon, and as for after the match, well that's something else (1973: 57).

That this central characteristic of the rugby subculture in England has also been transplanted, along with the game itself, to the United States is readily evident. The strong tradition of cameraderie before and after the game is a central feature of American rugby (cf. Frey, 1973):

> Rugby is the only sport I know of in the world where you can go out drinking with your opponents before the game, try to kill them during the game, and then have a party afterwards. If you play any team anywhere, then the host team provides a party for the opposing team. This is a tradition. We always provide two kegs of beer for our opponents after every single game, and we would expect them to do the same (Orloff, 1974: 45).

Riffenburgh (1974) has similarly commented on the tremendous sense of sportsmanship and cameraderie on the American rugby scene, symbolized by the post-game ritual of forming a double line and shaking the hands of the opposing players as they file off the field. "Afterwards the kegs are tapped and offenses committed during the heat of battle disappear in singing and toasts of friendship" (1974: 47).

With respect to the vandalism characteristic of the subculture in England, Sheard and Dunning (1973) relate its occurrence to the loosening of internalized restraints as a result of drunkenness. They maintain that drunkenness appears to be a necessary precondition for the ritual enactments of the subculture, and that these rituals often degenerate into

behaviour which results in damage to property. On the subject of vandalism, Laidlaw comments that:

> another (player) threw a bed down a four-storey stairwell in a French hotel . . . the 1968 British Lions had a small clique called "the wreckers" who developed a peculiarly British penchant for dismantling hotel bedrooms (1973: 63).

It would seem, then, that certain patterns of behaviour centred around the deliberate contravention of everyday norms are characteristic and traditional features of the rugby subculture in many countries. As Sheard and Dunning point out, such behaviour became accepted as normal, was not regarded as criminal or deviant, and was condoned by society at large as evidence of "excusable high spirits." Other factors are obviously of key importance, however, with regard to societal reaction to such behaviour:

> the players are allowed to behave with impunity in a manner which would bring immediate condemnation and punishment were it to occur among other social strata or even among members of the upper and middle classes in a different social setting (Sheard and Dunning, 1973: 7).

Laidlaw also emphasizes that rugby players, especially during tours, are seldom punished for instances of vandalism or theft, assault or violence, other than "the occasional word of restraint" (1973: 63), and it would appear that such behaviour does not offend against the norms of the rugby subculture. Why such behaviour is not considered sufficiently "deviant" to warrant societal sanctions or punishment is a matter for further consideration.

IV

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The intention of this study is to examine the characteristics of the rugby subculture, with particular reference to the patterns of behaviour of the members of the subculture. In order for this to be satisfactorily accomplished, it has already been suggested that an interactionist perspective represents the most suitable approach. It thus becomes necessary to select a methodology which is appropriate for the sociological analysis of subcultures and is capable of being incorporated into an interactionist perspective.

Several scholars have argued that field research constitutes the methodology *par excellence* in the social sciences. Although such an approach is often strenuous and difficult, Hughes argues for the wider adoption of field work in sociological analysis, maintaining that it is "not merely one among several methods of social study but is paramount. It is, more than any other methods, itself a practice, consciously undertaken, in sociology itself" (1960: vii). Prior support for this position, with particular reference to participant observation in field research, was provided by Becker and Geer:

> The most complete form of the sociological datum is the form in which the participant observer gathers it . . . such a datum gives us more information about the event under study than data gathered by any other sociological method (1957: 28).

While support for participant observation in general sociological analysis may not meet with general consensus, it would appear to be a particularly suitable methodology for this present investigation. Any sociological analysis of the behaviour of a particular group in society, especially an investigation of deviant behaviour within that group, has to be able to overcome the problem of the sensitivity of the issue in question. Unless the researcher can establish rapport with the group in which he is interested, it is unlikely that he will receive accurate or truthful information from its members. According to Blalock (1970), participant observation is ideally suited for studying various forms of deviant behaviour, and much of the research into subcultures, especially deviant subcultures, has been carried out by investigators who actually became a part of these organizations in the course of their studies.

Polsky (1969) argues that any major advance in the scientific understanding of deviant lifestyles or subcultures and their relation to the larger society is most likely to be obtained through field research of these groups. Indeed, Becker is emphatic that participant observation represents the most satisfactory way to examine deviant behaviour:

> we do not have enough studies in which the person doing the research has achieved close contact with those he studies, so that he can become aware of the complex and manifold character of the deviant activity (1963: 168).

With specific reference to the sociological analysis of sport, Voigt has recognized the value of field research in the investigation of particular sports subcultures:

> The task of identifying and analyzing sports subcommities [sic], including the job of teasing out values and goals . . . is a pioneer task for the serious study of sport (1974: 137).

Loy and Segrave have also declared their support for participant observation as a pertinent methodological tool for sociologists of sport, claiming that such "exploratory research with its emphasis on discovery and creativity often results in the discovery and description of significant sociological variables" (1974: 299). Page, too, has emphasized the need for greater understanding of the meaning that a particular subculture has for its members, and stresses that such understanding requires "study which involves close observation, participation, and . . . a measure of empathy with the members of the group" (1973: 36) (cf. Schafer, 1975).

Participant observation has a long established tradition within the interactionist perspective. It has been promoted as a most appropriate methodology for the investigation of subcultures, sports subcultures, and deviant behaviour. It consequently appears to be singularly suitable for this present study.

Methodology in Participant Observation

Although participant observation techniques had been employed at an earlier date (see e.g. Le Play, 1879), it was largely through the impact of members of the "Chicago school" that the methodology became accepted as a significant tool in social science research. The perceptive studies of Thrasher (1927), Lynd and Lynd (1929) and Shaw (1930), amongst others, did not refer to the role of the participant observer *per se*, but their insight was drawn from their personal knowledge of the people and their way of life. Whyte (1943) was one of the first to stress the importance of participant observation as a primary methodology for sociological studies of the community, and such a tradition is now well estab-

lished (see e.g. Hollingshead, 1949; Becker, 1953; Goffman, 1961a, 1961b, 1963a, 1963b, 1967; Glaser and Strauss, 1965; Clark, 1967; Polsky, 1969).

Schwartz and Schwartz have offered the following definition of participant observation as:

> a process in which the observer's presence in a social situation is maintained for the purpose of scientific investigation. The observer is in a face-to-face relationship with the observed, and, by participating with them in their natural setting, he gathers data. Thus, the observer is part of the context being observed, and he both modifies and is influenced by this context (1955: 344).

As McCall and Simmons (1969) have observed, however, it is somewhat misleading to conceive of participant observation as a single method. It involves a combination of methods and techniques such as direct social interaction, observation, formal and informal interviewing, document analysis, self-introspection, and a general flexibility in its approach. This flexibility is seen as one of the merits of this methodology:

> In contrast to social surveys, studies which utilize participant observation are relatively unstructured. Indeed, one of the major advantages of this method is that the investigator is free to capitalize upon unanticipated research opportunities as they present themselves and to make use of his informants in the most strategic way possible (Poplin, 1972: 227).

In such a way, certain types of data which can only be unearthed by the researcher who enters into close and continuous interaction with his informants are more likely to be obtained.

Becker (1958) described participant observation as the gathering of data by participating in the daily life of the group or organization being investigated. The participant observer:

> watches the people he is studying to see what situations they ordinarily meet and how they behave in them. He enters into conversation

> with some or all of the participants in these situations and discovers their interpretations of the events he has observed (1958: 652).

Thus, through the conscious and systematic sharing in the life activities and in the interests and affects of the group (cf. Kluckhohn, 1940), the participant observer is ideally situated to obtain information about the behaviour of the members of the group.

Roles in Participant Observation

Field studies utilizing participant observation may be classified according to the role adopted by the investigator. Such a classification of roles has been provided by Junker (1952, 1960) and Gold (1954, 1958), and there seems to be reasonable agreement as to the nature of the different roles possible. Gold (1958) has argued that there are essentially four roles which may be adopted, with these roles being on a continuum from the complete participant to the complete observer. It may be useful to briefly examine each of these roles before describing the nature of the role of the researcher in this study.

(1) Complete Participant:

In such a role, the observer remains completely concealed as to his true identity and purposes. He assumes role behaviours appropriate to members of the group, and attempts to become a fully fledged member of the group under investigation. An example of such an approach is to be found in the classic study by Festinger, Riecken and Schacter (1956) of a small group of people who had predicted the destruction of the world.

The major consideration in the adoption of such a role, particularly with reference to the observation of deviant behaviour, is the ethical problem inherent in the failure to divulge scientific intent.

As Junker has observed:

> When the complete participant emerges, so to speak, to report as a social scientist, he may expect to be evaluated by some persons as something of a spy and he must also be prepared to cope with difficult problems of ethics and professional responsibility, not to mention problems of identity and self-conception (1960: 36).

While such an approach may be forced upon the sociologist because of the nature of the group, or the nature of the information he wishes to obtain, the problem of scientific necessity versus ethics is not one which should be ignored.

(2) Participant as Observer:

In adopting the role of participant as observer, Gold (1958) and Junker (1960) emphasize that while the approach is basically similar to that of the complete participant, it differs significantly in that the role of the field worker is not wholly concealed. As Gold explains, "both field worker and informant are aware that theirs is a field relationship. This mutual awareness tends to minimize problems of role-pretending" (1958: 220).

While such a role may limit access to certain "secret" information, the observer at least is ideally placed to record the lifestyle and characteristics of the group of which he has become a member. One of the major problems of this role is that the informant may become too closely identified with the field worker, and as such ceases to be merely an informant but becomes an observer himself. In his superb analysis of street corner society, Whyte describes such an instance:

> Doc found his experience of working with me interesting and enjoyable, and yet the relationship had its drawbacks. He once commented: "You've slowed me up plenty since you've been down here. Now, when I do something, I have to think what Bill Whyte

> would want to know about it and how I can explain it. Before, I used to do things by instinct (1955: 301).

Despite some drawbacks, however, this role has frequently been employed in community studies (see e.g. Hollingshead, 1949; Gans, 1965; Liebow, 1967), where "it is very common for the investigator to announce his purposes and intentions but then to blend into the fabric of local life as much as possible" (Poplin, 1972: 280).

(3) Observer as Participant:

In this role the observer's activities are made known at the outset, and he is more or less publicly sponsored by people in the situation being studied (cf. Junker, 1960). Such a role, according to Gold (1958), is used in studies involving one-visit interviews only:

> The nature of the contact is brief, highly formalized through the use of questionnaires, and there is no attempt to establish any sense of an enduring relationship with the respondent (Denzin, 1970: 193).

Denzin equates such a role with the fundamental thesis underlying the social survey, but Poplin (1972) questions why the adoption of such a role must necessarily limit the researcher to one-visit interviews: "A skilled investigator can explain his purposes to community members but still place his emphasis upon observation rather than participation" (1972: 281).

According to Loy and Segrave (1974), observers as participants have provided accounts:

> which usually afford the greatest sociological insight as they are written by individuals whose explicit intent from the outset of their observation is to describe and explain the social patterns, problems, and processes associated with a specific group (1974: 301).

Such a description could equally be applied to the roles of complete par-

ticipant and participant as observer, and according to both Gold's and Junker's classifications, it would seem highly unlikely that the observer as participant would provide studies of greater sociological insight using one-visit interviews as the source of their information.

(4) Complete Observer:

In this approach, the researcher is close to the scene of the action, but at the same time is removed from any interaction with the group under investigation. By observing people in ways in which it is not necessary for them to take him into account, the observer uses his subjects as informants without their knowledge (cf. Gold, 1958). Failure to become an accepted member of a specific group may again force the sociologist to adopt such a role (cf. Liebow, 1967), but its most common usage "is best seen in experiments where observations are recorded mechanically or conducted through one-way mirrors in the laboratory" (Denzin, 1970: 193).

While it might appear from this description that the four approaches can be sharply distinguished with the researcher adopting only one of these roles, they may all be utilized in the course of one particular investigation. As Denzin has commented:

> in our studies of interactions in a small psychiatric hospital, observations were frequently made through one-way mirrors . . . . This was the case despite the fact that we largely performed in the role of participants-as-observers. Similarly, we often interviewed patients only once, never again seeing them (1970: 194).

The flexibility of participant observation is such that most sociological analyses employing this methodology will evidence similar diversity in the use of roles depending on the particular social situation, the specific people being observed, and the type of information required.

Participant Observation in the Sociology of Sport

Loy and Segrave (1974) have provided a classification of sport-related studies utilizing the different roles in participant observation. According to the authors, "there is a paucity of solid research studies in sport situations based on the method of participant observation. However, several works of both a journalistic and sociological nature can be cited" (1974: 300). While their listing of such works is valuable, their classification of these accounts is somewhat confusing, as they do not appear to adhere to available descriptions of the differing roles. For example, they cite Meggyesy (1971) and Shaw (1973) under the category of the complete participant. While these two authors may not have revealed their research intentions, it was hardly necessary for them to assume role behaviours appropriate to members of the group (cf. Gold, 1958; Junker, 1960) in order for them to provide participant observation accounts of football. Rather, these works were the recollections of bona fide participants in the world of football.

Loy and Segrave also appear to have misinterpreted the role of the observer as participant. It may be, however, that they have interpreted such a role in their own terms. To suggest that Polsky's (1969) study of poolrooms falls into this category as they themselves describe it would nevertheless appear to be incorrect. Polsky's observations of poolrooms began many years before his account of the hustler's way of life was written, and his participation certainly had no scientific intent at the outset. As Polsky himself states:

> Billiard playing is my chief recreation. I have frequented poolrooms for over 20 years, and at one poolroom game, three-cushion billiards, am considered a far better than average player (1969: 35).

The apparent cause of some confusion over the classification of these accounts of field work in sport settings may, however, be explained. Many of the autobiographical and biographical accounts do not fit easily into any of the role descriptions previously discussed (cf. Gold, 1958; Junker, 1960; Denzin, 1970; Poplin, 1972), as none of these take into account the possibility that participant observation studies may be carried out by bona fide participants themselves. Since this situation applies to this present study as well, it becomes necessary to describe a more appropriate role model for such analysis.

Participant Observation and the Involved Observer

Clark's (1967) investigation of ghetto life provides considerable insight into the role of the involved observer in participant observation. Describing his research as "a summation of my personal and lifelong experiences and observations as a prisoner within the ghetto long before I was aware that I was really a prisoner" (1967: xv), Clark clearly indicates that previous participation within a particular group brings a new dimension to participant observation. Prior involvement in the group, however, as was the case in this present investigation, brings with it certain problems to offset the greater insight and knowledge about the group which the researcher has as his initial advantage.

As Clark explains, "I could never be fully detached as a scholar or participant" (1967: xv), and this is understandable in that the role of the involved observer entails not only participation in rituals and customs, but also involves the researcher in social competition within the group. Subjective involvement such as this may be seen as detrimental to scientific objectivity, although it should be noted that a failure to be-

come detached does not necessarily mean that the researcher cannot be objective. However, by examining some of the problems generally associated with participant observation, the question of subjective involvement can be examined, and the role of the involved observer as it pertains to this present study may be further clarified.

Problems in Participant Observation

(1) Time Commitment:

One of the major drawbacks for the social scientist in adopting the methodology of participant observation is that the time commitment is usually extremely demanding. As Poplin has observed, "It may be literally years before the investigator has observed enough to render a valid analysis of the community" (1972: 277). Consequently, it is not possible to establish definite time limitations on such research.

(2) Authenticity of Data

As Blalock (1970) has noted, one of the basic prerequisites of participant observation is that the researcher must gain the confidence of the group being investigated. His presence should not disrupt the group or interfere with the natural course of events if he is to be satisfied that "they will provide him with honest answers to his questions and not hide important activities from his view" (1970: 41). To a large extent, however, the involved observer is unlikely to be faced with such a problem, his prior participation within the group having helped to establish the necessary rapport, and his prior experiences enabling him to evaluate the sincerity of the response to his investigation.

(3) Identification and Objectivity:

One of the major difficulties encountered with participant obser-

vation is that the researcher seldom enters the situation with a completely open mind and without hunches as to what he will encounter. This is even more critical an issue for the involved observer. As Loy and Segrave have commented:

> there is the very real danger that the participant observer will "go native" and become so identified, oversocialized, and emotionally involved with a given group and its members that he ceases to be an objective observer (1974: 300).

It could be argued, however, that it is impossible for the sociologist to approach any issue or problem under investigation without certain preconceived ideas and presuppositions. Obviously, an attempt must be made by the involved observer to recognize and identify such presuppositions. In essence, the whole question of scientific integrity is involved, as it is involved in <u>any</u> scientific investigation. There is nothing to suggest that by adopting the role of involved observer scientific objectivity will <u>necessarily</u> be compromised.

(4) Revelation of Research Role:

In participant observation, the researcher may or may not reveal his research interests, and such a decision has not only ethical, but important methodological implications. With reference to the latter, Babbie claims that:

> If he openly admits that he is conducting a scientific study of the group, his presence may very well affect the phenomenon he wishes to study, and awareness that their actions may be reported in print may affect the actions of the participants (1973: 38).

By revealing his role, the investigator faces the risk of influencing the behaviour of the group. His presence may restrict the members' conversation, they may shape their behaviour to comply with generally accepted norms, or they may react in a way to fit in with their preconceptions of

the researcher's expectations.

As previously mentioned, however, failure to reveal the research role raises ethical questions concerning deception. In the past, this has sometimes resulted in considerable controversy, ill-feeling and academic censure (see e.g. Vidich and Bensman, 1968). The latter problem does not arise in this present study, as the research role of the investigator was made known to the members of the rugby subculture. With respect to the methodological implications, prior participation in the rugby subculture enabled the researcher to estimate the effect that the disclosure had on the behaviour of the other members of the subculture. Possibly because of the participants' familiarity with the researcher, the disclosure did not appear to be a significant factor in producing changes in behaviour.

(5) Participant Observation and Deviant Behaviour:

One of the concerns of this present investigation was to examine deviant behaviour within the rugby subculture. Where social scientists are in a position to become an actual member of the group under investigation, the issue of becoming actively involved in the forms of deviant behaviour being studied must be faced. This problem may be overcome by adopting a peripheral role, where the observer participates in the situation without actually participating in the deviant behaviour (see e.g. Humphreys, 1970).

Conversely, the researcher may actively participate in deviant activities, and such has been the case on occasion. Polsky was not just an <u>observer</u> of the hustler:

> Frequently I play hustlers for money and occasionally I hustle some non-hustlers, undertaking the latter activity primarily to recoup losses on the

> former. I have been a backer for two hustlers (1969: 35).

It becomes a moral decision on the part of the researcher as to where the line should be drawn with regard to involvement in such activity, and while a personal moral code may compromise the scientific role to some extent, Polsky maintains that this factor is not highly significant and can be satisfactorily accommodated without adversely affecting the research.

(6) Lack of Quantifiable Data:

A common criticism of participant observation is that the methodology normally fails to yield data which can be expressed in quantitative form. Thus, it is impossible to manipulate data in order to establish relationships between pertinent variables, and statistical analysis is precluded. Such a criticism is probably well founded, but as Lüschen has noted:

> Rather sophisticated statistical analyses do not make the data any better; with regard to their interpretation they make things worse since [they] may pretend a quality of data that often is not existent (1973: 166).

If participant observation is evaluated in terms of the uses to which it is put, there seems little doubt that it is eminently suited for the task of obtaining in-depth information (cf. Poplin, 1972). As Bordua (1961) has observed, the best available source of facts concerning adolescent gangs is still the account provided by Thrasher (1927). It would seem shortsighted, therefore, to consider participant observation techniques as useful only in providing baseline data for future research.

(7) Replication of Data:

One of the fundamental difficulties with participant observation

is the lack of standardization involved. Loy and Segrave (1974) point out that the greatest limitation of non-standardized means of data collection is the difficulty in assessing the reliability of the method and the validity of the information gathered. However, if the methodological procedures are carefully laid out, replication of the study should not be impossible. By clearly explaining the techniques employed in this present study, there seems little reason to doubt that the study can be extended, for comparative purposes, to other specific sports subcultures.

Methodology of the Study

Several researchers (see e.g. Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918; Dollard, 1937; Hollingshead, 1949; Seeley et al., 1956; Liebow, 1967; Humphreys, 1970) have provided detailed accounts of the methodological procedures which they employed in their respective studies, while the contributions of Whyte (1955), Gans (1965) and Polsky (1969) have been outstanding in this respect. By examining some of these accounts it should be possible to provide a rationale for the procedures used in this present study. As Warner has indicated:

> Research is fundamentally a learning process for the scientist who does it; if what he learns is to be successfully transmitted to others, he must be able to communicate how and why he did it. Those who understand are then able to test his methods and conclusions by repeating what he did (Warner, 1941; 7).

Whyte has suggested that while there have been numerous published studies which have utilized and perhaps described the techniques of participant observation, a good number of these have failed to acknowledge "that the researcher, like his informants, is a social animal" (1955: 279). In a situation where the researcher spends a limited amount of time in the

field and is able to keep his personal social life separate from his research activities, the problem is not as acute:

> If, on the other hand, the researcher is living for an extended period in the community he is studying, his personal life is inextricably mixed with his research. A real explanation, then, of how the research was done necessarily involves a rather personal account of how the researcher lived during the period of the study (Whyte, 1955: 279).

Such an account should also include the details of initial involvement in the group, especially in the case of the involved observer, since this occurs before the undertaking of any sociological analysis of the group.

An account of techniques and procedures should also describe what Hollingshead (1949) has referred to as the different "phases" of involvement in the study. Most studies of groups or communities appear to proceed along somewhat similar lines, with the initial introductory period of gradual involvement being followed by a "field phase," and finally the withdrawal from the field and the writing up of the research. These phases should be clearly described, and the amount of time spent in each needs to be recorded. This will serve to indicate to those interested in similar studies the possible time commitment likely to be involved in the work.

A further aspect which needs to be considered is the adaptations which may be necessary in order for the researcher to blend into the group. Liebow has described his conscious efforts in this respect:

> Almost from the beginning, I adopted the dress and something of the speech of the people with whom I was in most frequent contact, as best I could without looking silly or feeling uncomfortable. My vocabulary and diction changed, but not radically. Thus, while remaining conspicuous in speech and perhaps in dress, I had dulled some of the characteristics of my background (1967: 255).

Liebow maintains that such adaptations are of considerable importance in making the researcher more accessible to his informants (cf. Polsky, 1969), noting in retrospect, however, that "the degree to which one becomes a participant is as much a matter of perceiving oneself as a participant as it is of being accepted as a participant by others" (1967: 256).

The factors discussed above can best be dealt with elsewhere. Certain methodological procedures, however, need to be covered in detail in this section. The sources of data are, of course, of paramount importance, and there are many approaches to the gathering of data which may be adopted (cf. Whyte, 1955; Gans, 1965; Polsky, 1969). The following were employed in this investigation:

(1) Daily Log:

A daily log of events and casual or informal interviews and observations was maintained during all road trips of the rugby club in which the researcher participated during the period under investigation. A daily log was similarly kept during all home games involving the club throughout the same period.

(2) Field Diary:

In addition to the daily log, a field diary containing the researcher's personal impressions was also maintained. The value of such a personal record, according to Junker, is that it can include "recorded observations which may never be recorded as results or findings but which are significant details in a 'conversation with one's self'" (1960: 17). In such a way it becomes possible for the researcher to assess changes in his own perception of the events which he is involved in as a participant observer.

(3) Formal and Informal Interviewing:

Informal discussions with members of the rugby subculture were recorded wherever possible. In the initial stages, the recording of such discussions took place after the fact. As the members became more familiar with the work of the researcher, notes were compiled during the course of these discussions, while in the concluding stages of the research a tape recorder was used. Where necessary information could not easily be obtained through informal observation or casual conversation, structured interviews were conducted. In numerous instances, members of the subculture were interviewed concerning specific incidents which the researcher had observed, in order to obtain the individual's perception of the incident.

(4) Systematic Observations:

Repeated observations were made of any recurring events, such as team meetings and weekly social functions of an informal nature, as well as the more formally organized functions of the rugby subculture. During the field phase of the research, it was quite common to spend several hours on two to three nights a week at the "headquarters" of the rugby subculture.

(5) Use of Informants:

Certain informants who were willing and able to provide information were interviewed to obtain descriptions of a limited number of activities and events involving members of the rugby subculture in which the researcher was unable to participate. On occasion, these informants were also used to provide additional information concerning events in which the researcher had participated, particularly where the researcher's own observations were incomplete.

(6) Attendance at Outside Events:

The researcher periodically attended events and gatherings not related to the rugby subculture. Included in such events were observations of sporting and community activities, and visits to taverns and dances. In this way, some insight into "accepted community standards" of behaviour was obtained.

(7) Informal Visiting with Friends and Neighbours:

Considerable time was spent with friends, neighbours, academic colleagues, and acquaintances discussing the activities and behaviour of members of the rugby subculture. This provided an opportunity to assess societal reaction to a certain extent (albeit a biased sample), and, in addition, assisted the researcher to adopt an "outside" perspective with regard to the behaviour of members of the rugby subculture.

(8) Formal and Informal Interviewing of Community Functionaries:

Informal conversations and formal interviews were conducted with local police, attorneys, city officials and community leaders. Through such interaction, an attempt was made to assess the "officially stated" reaction to certain types of behaviour. This also enabled the researcher to assess the "official image" of the sportsman.

(9) Diaries, Autobiographical Accounts, and Related Documents:

Access to members' personal diaries and other materials provided valuable information. This included several short stories about the rugby subculture written for university course requirements. In addition, newspaper reports, club correspondence, and other documents relating to the rugby subculture were made use of in this study.

(10) Recording of Data:

In deciding what information should be recorded in the research

report and what should be discarded, an attempt was made to include as representative a sample of information as possible. Verbatim reports have been frequently utilized, and where these contain statements of some importance concerning the values and beliefs of members of the rugby sub-culture, a sample of contrary viewpoints (where these occurred) has also been included.

V

INTRODUCTION TO THE RUGBY SUBCULTURE

The Area

The city of Missoula is located at the hub of five valleys on the west side of the Continental Divide in the State of Montana. It is an area rich in the traditions of the Old West. In 1806, Captain Lewis of the Lewis and Clark Expedition camped across the river from what is now the university campus, while Flathead-Salish and Blackfoot Indians clashed regularly at the northeast edge of the land now owned by the university. By 1866, Hell's Gate, as the town was then known, was named the county seat, and became a stop for the Overland Stage and Pony Express. Following the Louisiana Purchase, the land became the property of the United States, and in 1889 the territory was accepted into the Union as the forty-first state.

Today, Missoula has a population of approximately 30,000 within the city limits, and over 50,000 in the greater metropolitan area. Situated at an elevation of 3,200 feet, the city enjoys a mild, semi-arid climate. Lumbering, forest products, tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, mining and livestock are the major industries of the area. Four shopping centres and a large downtown district house most of the businesses in the Missoula marketing area. The city has one daily newspaper, four local radio stations and two local television stations, and there are twenty-one grade schools, four high schools and one university.

Recreation in the community is varied. Missoula has eighteen parks and picnic areas, seven tennis courts, three golf courses, fifteen ball fields and two swimming pools. The geographic area around the city provides opportunities for skiing, hiking, horseback riding, camping, water skiing, fishing, big game and bird hunting, swimming and boating. The famed Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks lie within a day's drive from the city, while Flathead Lake, one of the largest freshwater lakes in the Western United States, is located about sixty miles to the north.

The University

The University of Montana was chartered in 1893 by the Third Legislative Assembly of Montana, and the main campus was established in 1899 at the mouth of the Hellgate Canyon in Missoula. From an initial group of fifty students and seven faculty members in 1895, the campus community has grown to nearly 8,000 students and 400 faculty members. The main University Campus spreads over 201 acres on the east side of the city, with an additional 624 acres on Mount Sentinel and 295 acres at Fort Missoula. A few blocks south of the main campus is a 154 acre site with married student housing units and a nine-hole golf course.

University of Montana Rugby Club

Rugby was first introduced to the University of Montana by W_____ R_____, an Irish graduate student, who established the Rugby Club in 1968. The club had a very informal and irregular schedule for many years, playing a few games in the fall, spring and summer months against any opposition which was within a reasonable travelling distance. It had several foreign coaches, including a Canadian and a New Zealander, prior to 1973, and had

a fluctuating membership with a hard core of perhaps no more than ten regular players. The team had to wait until 1972 before gaining its first victory on the rugby field, this coming rather surprisingly against one of the major club sides in Calgary, Alberta. Up until 1973, most of the club's fixtures were against Canadian club sides, although the team did travel on occasions to tournaments in the state of Washington. By 1973, the club could call upon about twenty players, not all of whom played regularly, and it was still common for the team to have to take complete novices on some of their road trips.

The club received some financial assistance from the University of Montana Students' Association (ASUM) towards uniforms and travel costs, this amounting to $600.00 in 1973. A committee presided over the affairs of the club, with the Faculty Advisor required by ASUM regulations also having some input. Generally, a loose, democratic control was exercised by those members of the club who were willing to become involved in its organization. Frequently, the burden of organization of fixtures and grounds was left to the President, while travel arrangements for road trips were organized at the last minute at the "headquarters" of the Rugby Club, the Downtown Tavern.

During the period from 1974 to 1976, the club gained in playing strength, and was frequently able to field two separate teams. The financial contributions from ASUM were more than trebled, and financially, the club is presently on a much more secure footing. A regular schedule of twenty-five to thirty games is testimony to the growing popularity of the sport and the increasing organization of the club. In the past three years, the club has participated in several major rugby tournaments in the United States and Canada, including the National Rugby Championships

in Monterey, California, in 1974. It has embarked on three extensive tours through the northwestern states, and in 1975 hosted its first major tournament in Missoula.

Members of the Subculture

Although the numbers fluctuated a little, the composition of the group was generally stable, and there were between thirty to thirty-five male and twenty-five to thirty female members within the subculture during the period under investigation. A majority of the ruggers, who ranged in age from early to mid-twenties, came from middle and upper-middle class backgrounds, many of their fathers being engaged in professional occupations. Players from blue collar homes were considerably underrepresented as would be expected in a group comprised of present or former university students. About one quarter of the players had already graduated from college, or completed their undergraduate studies during the course of this investigation, and a smaller number yet had dropped out of the university without completing a degree. The majority were enrolled as students at the university. Many of the group had been raised in other states, and a number of them had been domiciled in Missoula only during the period of their university studies. A small percentage of the players had parents residing in the city itself, but very few of these were still living at home.

With regard to their previous athletic history, participation in a number of high school sports characterized the background of the players, and most of them had been successful in gaining letters in their major sport. About half of the group had participated in high school football, some of them gaining all-conference honours and awards. At the college

level, however, only a small number of the members had been successful in gaining places on varsity teams. Few of them had attempted to continue their football participation at this level, those who had tried out for the team and failed to make the grade constituting a very small minority within the group.

Although their participation in official intercollegiate competition was limited, the ruggers were considerably involved in intramural activities within the university. A majority of the players took part in two or more different sports, usually on teams representing the Rugby Club or fraternity groups. Most of the ruggers indicated that they had received considerable encouragement and support from their parents with regard to active participation in sport, and in most cases their parents had had a history of sports involvement themselves. Extensive participation in sport was also characteristic of the remainder of the family group, most of the players having siblings who were keen, and in some cases, highly successful athletes.

Some of the ruggers appeared to have become somewhat disillusioned with organized, competitive sport as a result of their experiences in high school. Typical of these was one of the ruggers who had quit his high school basketball team as a sophomore because of his objections towards the attitude of his coach. "We lost a playoff game towards the end of the season, but it was a good game and I enjoyed it. We came back into the dressing room after the game and the coach was crying. He was really upset, and kept telling us how disappointed he was with us, and I thought 'Wow, it's only a game!' I didn't play the next year."

Most of the players had a positive attitude with regard to their high school participation, however, and although some of the former foot-

ball players expressed dissatisfaction concerning prevailing attitudes in the sport, they were not necessarily negative in their feelings towards the game itself. "At first when I went out I was under a lot of pressure, but by the time that I graduated I was playing because it was fun and I was enjoying myself. My father was a football player, and when I was a sophomore I had him to worry about, and I had to make the team. There's more pressure when you're younger because you don't know how good you are, but I really got to like football." In contrast to this attitude, a number of the ruggers with no previous participation in football were quite opposed to the sport, and this resulted in a somewhat ambivalent attitude within the group.

The women within the subculture were two to three years younger on the average than the ruggers, ranging in age from late teens to mid-twenties. A majority of them had been born and raised in Montana, and most of them came from similar backgrounds as the men, although their fathers tended to be more frequently engaged in commerce or white collar occupations. Most of the non-students within the group were employed in secretarial or technical positions, and four of the women were married to members of the rugby team.

About half of the women had participated in high school sports, and a number of them had had successful athletic careers. The student members of the group had seldom been successful in intercollegiate athletics, but most of them participated in intramural activities, and the non-students were frequently active in city league bowling and softball teams. In contrast to the ruggers, a greater percentage of the women claimed that they had received little encouragement from their parents to participate in sports. A majority of the group, however, came from

family backgrounds which were otherwise supportive of such activity, parents and siblings often participating extensively in a variety of sporting events.

Characteristics of the Subculture

The social organization to which the ruggers, their wives and girl-friends belong has already been referred to as the rugby subculture. The norms, values and other characteristics must be shown to be different in some degree from the dominant culture before it can be justifiably claimed that this rugby fraternity is in fact worthy of such a designation. While some of these characteristics may not differ a great deal from those of a number of other sports subgroups, they must, when viewed in their entirety, form a unique entity. If such an analysis is successful in establishing the rugby fraternity as a distinct and recognizable subgroup within the society, then reference to this group as a subculture would appear to be warranted.

(a) Norms

Perhaps the strongest norm within the rugby subculture was that associated with drinking beer (cf. Laidlaw, 1973; Sheard and Dunning, 1973; Orloff, 1974; Riffenburgh, 1974). On the Friday night before each home game, the members of the subculture were expected to gather at the Downtown Tavern to welcome the visiting team, the party usually continuing until closing time. After each game, the team provided two or three kegs of beer for the party which followed, and it was virtually mandatory for all of the ruggers to attend. The drinking sessions after practices were also well attended, and undoubtedly it was this frequent interaction

which had a lot to do with the cohesiveness of the group. In fact, beer drinking was such a dominant feature that those who failed to join in this social aspect of the subculture seldom remained with the sport. "Most of the new players like the game. But when I'm recruiting, I always advertise that they should be good partyers. I think that the people who aren't good partyers don't really fit too well into the system. If you don't go to the parties and everything, you sort of feel left out."

One of the younger players recalled his first introduction to a rugby party. "I couldn't believe how loose it was, how crazy people were going. I couldn't believe how much beer drinking there was. It was totally opposite to what I was used to in high school football. Training? Nobody's ever heard of training on a rugby team. It was almost like something you hear about or read about, but don't really believe ever happens. Everybody was so drunk, and doing what they wanted to do no matter what it was. I just couldn't believe it. I was just like a little kid standing there staring." Another player talked to me about joining a rugby club some years earlier in another state. "I was waiting for the track season to start, and I went out for rugby to try and get into shape with them. At that point, though, I didn't fit in at all. I think every rugger I've seen is pretty standard. I didn't drink much then, and it was hard to get into it if you didn't drink, so I quit after two weeks. When I joined the team here I think I was ready for it."

Certainly, those players who performed well at parties were very quickly accepted as one of the group. One rookie commented, "I was surprised I fitted in so quickly. Maybe it was because I was the party type -- you have to be that to get in with the group." The pressure to

drink was also responsible for some of the players quitting rugby altogether. One of the ruggers, a fine athlete and well respected by the rest of the group, both as a person and a player, finally felt that the pressure to attend the parties had become too great for him to continue. "Everyone liked him, and I don't think it worried anyone that he didn't drink and didn't take part in some of our activities. Yet I think he felt he wasn't really a part of the group. In a way, he didn't really fit in. He liked playing the game, but he didn't like to drink and carry on like the rest of us. I don't think he felt comfortable with us."

Another of the norms of the subculture was the ritualistic strip (cf. Sheard and Dunning, 1973) which new players had to take part in to become an accepted member of the group. This ritual may take place immediately after the newcomer's first game, either at the grounds or afterwards during the party, although it is sometimes postponed until after the player's first game away from home. The established players form a circle around the initiate and begin chanting, "Take them down, you Zulu warrior. Take them down, you Zulu chief." As the chant continues, the new member slowly sheds his clothes until he is completely naked. The ritual always takes place in mixed company, and more often than not is performed in front of complete strangers, especially if it occurs in a public bar or tavern.

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when the "Zulu" became accepted as an initiation rite for new players, and it was not a rookie prerequisite when it was first introduced. By 1973, however, it was firmly established, and the pressure to perform this ritual became much stronger for the players who joined the team after this time. Many of the newer players were particularly nervous about the performance of their first

"Zulu." "I was really self-conscious. Before I did it I got super duper drunk. I decided I was going to get so blasted I wouldn't remember it. I was dreading it. According to some of the guys on the team it was a pretty good Zulu, though."

For some of the ruggers, it is unlikely that they would have performed this initiation rite if it had not been for the constant pressure from the established members of the subculture. "I didn't want to do it, and I wouldn't have if it hadn't been for all the pressure. I had a 20 oz. beer and then I did a pretty good one. But I felt more a part of the group after I'd done it. It's a sort of manhood custom, and symbolizes some kind of entry into the group." Almost without exception, the rookies felt the need to get drunk before the performance of their first "Zulu," and considering the circumstances under which the ritual was sometimes demanded, this is hardly surprising. "There was a lot of pressure, everybody telling me I had to do it, and I wanted to be a part of the team. But they picked a cabaret in Calgary to make me do it. Up on the bar at this cabaret, in front of God and everyone! I was drunk enough, though, and I knew I wouldn't be back in Calgary for a year."

Whether any prospective ruggers were deterred from taking up the sport because of this ritual is difficult to assess, but it does seem possible. "If you don't do it, every time you go to a game you're going to find there's a crowd around you singing the Zulu warrior. There are a few guys who haven't showed up to practice after they found out about this. I don't know whether it's because of the Zulu, or if they don't like the game or the parties. I can't say definitely, but I would say it would turn some people off. If they're keen enough on the whole rugby scene, they'll eventually get drunk enough to do it, and after that it's

all downhill."

(b) Values

Perhaps the most outstanding characteristic of organized sport in America is the value placed on winning. In a club which went for four years without a victory on the rugby field, either the emphasis on winning had to be a low priority, or some rationalization of the success ideology must have occurred in order for the team to continue to exist. The differing emphasis towards winning (cf. McElroy, 1971) was perhaps best exemplified by former football players whose attitudes underwent a considerable change after they joined the rugby team.

One of these players had just been cut from the university football squad when he was persuaded to try out for rugby. "I was really mad at being cut from football because I was sure I had the ability to make the team. So when I first went out for rugby I started with the attitude that I was going to show them how tough I was. I was going to break people apart. Like in football, that's my attitude, that's the only way to win. All the guys have got helmets and pads on, and they think they're hot crap. Anyway, I decided to go out at rugby and try and hurt as many people as I could. In one of the first practices I jumped on J_____'s foot and broke two of his toes. In my first game, I backed off about ten yards and ran at this loose ruck. I hit one of the guys on our own team as hard as I could and broke two of his ribs. Then in this game in Portland, I dislocated a guy's shoulder, and I was really proud of myself for doing it. Then all of a sudden, you know, after all those games and going to the parties afterwards and meeting all the other players, I lost this attitude completely. I was starting to feel really ashamed of myself,

because this just isn't the rugby spirit. If you're playing football, that's something else. But in rugby, as long as it's a good game you don't really mind if you win or not. I don't hold any animosity toward anybody now."

For many of the veterans on the team who had played during the period when the team constantly lost, winning obviously was not greatly important. In fact, there was considerable feeling, bordering on animosity towards what the ruggers generally termed the "jock image." Certainly, many of the new players tended to have such an attitude when they first began to play rugby. Those that retained such an attitude seldom lasted long with the sport, but generally most of the rookies reacted positively toward this different approach. "A lot of them come in blind, not really knowing what to expect. I think they come in expecting the same sort of thing as in high school athletics — you know, the big pressure, the big drive to win. When they find that there isn't this pressure they're a lot more comfortable and relaxed on the field, and they play better. If they make a mistake or screw up, people might get mad at them for a while, but more likely than not all they're going to get is some good natured razzing."

To suggest that winning was <u>not</u> important to the players, however, would be overstating the situation considerably. Indeed, it became apparent that once the club started winning more frequently, even the veterans placed more emphasis on victory, perhaps as a result of realizing that they had the potential to be successful. As one of the players commented, "Once we won our first game people started wanting to win. Most people wanted to win and they played to win after that, as well as to have fun and to learn."

Those players who had had successful athletic backgrounds in other sports certainly did not enjoy losing, but if it upset them greatly, initially, they soon seemed able to accept defeat with some degree of equanimity. A former high school football player and successful college wrestler talked to me about how his attitude had changed. "I've never liked to lose at anything I do, and when I first started playing rugby it really pissed me off and I really felt bad after we lost. After a while, though, I got to the point that I realized that rugby isn't all winning. It's not the major college attitude of you win or you're nothing. Now, I go out on the field and I'm going to play my guts out. It's going to hurt if we lose, sure, it always does. But if you've gone out and had a good time and had the hell knocked out of you, then that's fine. That's why I play the game. If you've gotten beat, it hurts for a while but then you forget about it. You go out and have a beer and talk about the game with the other guys and try to figure out what you did wrong."

Undoubtedly, the lower priority on winning and a less professionalized approach to the sport was the reason for some of the players quitting the rugby team altogether. "I think the attitude in football is almost opposite to rugby. Football's all competition -- when the game's over, that's it. In rugby, you stick together and have a good time. I get upset when we lose, but there's not that much pressure to win. I think we all like to win as much as we can, but if we lose getting together after the game helps you forget about it. That's probably the reason why somebody like D_____ dropped out. He was the kind of guy who liked to play real competitively. He didn't like standing around wasting his time at practices. The same with M_____. It wasn't com-

petitive enough for him, and I think he wanted to do something professionally in the way of sports. That's why he went out for the baseball team. They have a completely different attitude toward their game. They go out there to win, they practice really hard, and they don't drink much or get together after the game like we do."

Despite the close-knit nature of the subculture and the strength of subcultural norms, the members had considerable respect for individual differences in attitudes and behaviour within the group. Often the fact that people dropped out of the subculture was occasioned not so much because pressures to conform to particular standards of behaviour became intolerable. Rather, it seems that these persons "opted out" of the subculture, preferring to take part in other activities, or choosing a more appropriate way in which to occupy their leisure time. Tolerance of the attitudes of others was perhaps most clearly evident in the reaction of the members towards the small minority in the group who did not smoke marijuana. The few ruggers who fell into this latter category often commented on their situation. "You kind of feel left out sometimes, but after the first few times if you don't take any and just pass it on to the next guy, they soon stop handing it to you. They accept that you don't want it, and I don't feel any pressure whatsoever." In fact, the pressure which was placed on a couple of the veterans was never taken seriously. "At the start there was some pressure, but I've got my own attitude toward it. Most of the guys like to smoke, and sometimes I feel that I'm making a martyr out of myself. They try and make out that they want to get me in with the rest so that we can all be one big, happy family. But it's not real pressure -- it's more of a standing joke." The other veteran had never experienced any discomfort at all as a result

of his abstinence. "There's no pressure. I didn't feel that I had to smoke dope at all. I've always thought that alcohol can get me as high as they ever want me to be. I've never felt that I didn't belong, and I'm very proud of the fact that I was never forced into smoking."

(c) Beliefs

One of the strongest beliefs held by the members of the subculture was that no matter how they behaved they were unlikely to get into serious trouble as a result of their actions. One of the ruggers, who seemed to have led a particularly charmed existence in his escapes from the law, was positive that the members benefitted from some form of "divine guidance" in their activities. "We lead a sheltered life. There's never any repercussions from what we do, and it's almost as if somebody is following us around and keeping the law away from us. Not that there's been anything really serious. A few car accidents, but they've usually been caused by other drivers. But there have been no drunken driving charges or anything like that. It just seems to me that somebody is looking after us."

Certainly, there were times when the ruggers did become involved with the law, but the general feeling was that as long as they "played it cool" they were unlikely to be arrested. This attitude was justified in that none of them had ever been charged as a result of any of their numerous brushes with officialdom. Undoubtedly, my own interest in the consequences of their behaviour served to focus their attention on the fact that they seemed to have more than just luck on their side. This is illustrated by an amusing letter I received from one of the ruggers after an attempted visit to Canada was cut short at the border crossing when one of the guards discovered a quantity of marijuana in the ashtray of

his car. "I tried to tell him that I was an athlete and that it was all right for me to be deviant, but he wouldn't listen to me." He was a little perturbed at being refused entry, but promptly crossed over into Canada at another border crossing.

Another firmly established belief within the subculture was that the rugby songs must be memorized, and should not be sung from books or song sheets (cf. Sheard and Dunning, 1973). Initially, it seems as though some of the early members of the team may have learned these songs in this way. One of the veterans told me that "the first practice I went to we went for a beer afterwards over at W_____'s house. He told me that I had to learn some songs. I'd never heard anything like that before. He threw me a songbook, but I didn't even look at it. I didn't learn them from the book either. I started learning them when we went up to C_____ on the first rugby trip I went on."

Many of the ruggers felt very strongly about this oral song tradition. At one stage, just before the first extensive tour undertaken by the club, it was suggested that song sheets be made available. The idea behind this was to assist the large number of rookies to learn the songs so that the team could perform adequately in the singing contests on the tour. This idea was quickly abandoned because of the strength of the opposition. One of the veterans echoed the popular sentiments of the group. "I don't like singing rugby songs from a sheet. If you want to be a rugger you've got to learn the songs properly. I feel quite strongly about this."

(d) Symbols

The rugby subculture had certain unique symbols. On the team t-shirts, the emblem was a closed fist with thumb extended, and the words "Montana, Hit the Road." This rather puzzling motif was symbolic of the ritual that the team went through before each game, when all the players would form a circle and join their right hands in the centre. The captain would then lead the chant of "One, two, three -- Montana, hit the road," whereupon the team would release hands and perform the universal hitchhiking gesture. How this became a tradition within the subculture I was never completely able to establish, even though it was introduced while I was with the club. It may have resulted from a practical joke that the ruggers were fond of playing whenever they were greeting old friends. They would extend their arm as if to shake hands, and then take their hand away at the last moment and perform the "hit the road" gesture to the discomfort of the person whom they were greeting. It appears that they obtained such amusement from this that it was eventually adopted as the pre-game ritual and symbolic motif of the club.

Another popular rugby t-shirt throughout North America is emblazoned with the words "It Takes Leather Balls to Play Rugby," a statement correct enough in itself, but with a crude and obvious double meaning. This seems to be typical of the symbolism within the rugby subculture. Bumper stickers were also in great demand, the most popular of these reading "Rugby Players Eat Their Dead." The inference to Pier Paul Read's memorable book, Alive (1975), which recalls the anguished story of a team of rugby players who were forced to resort to cannibalism following a plane crash in the Andes, would be lost on anyone unfamiliar with the lore

of the game, and such a motif can only be regarded as offensive. All these artifacts, however, symbolize the crude public image which the ruggers seemed to wish to create.

(e) Language

The game of rugby, like any other sport, has its own technical language which only has meaning for those familiar with the game. The ruggers also had something of their own argot off the field as well, and although this had a definite meaning to the members, it is difficult to "translate" this for outsiders, especially where the origin of the term is somewhat obscure. The word "douche" came to be used as an expression of triumph conveying the idea that the speaker had managed to put something across one of his friends. It was first used by one of the ruggers when the team members were playing cards on the bus during a rugby tour in 1974. Whenever this player managed to unexpectedly take a trick he would yell "Douche!," and make a downward gesture with two of his fingers.

What the significance of this gesture and expression was to him no-one fully understood, but it quickly became popular. At one of the stops at a restaurant during this tour, one of the ruggers came out with a "Douche!" which could be heard throughout the entire room, an incident which resulted in a rather shocked silence from the audience, but which was greatly appreciated by the assembled ruggers. Recently, "Douche!" t-shirts have been added to the artifacts of the rugby subculture, these featuring a rugby player making the appropriate two-fingered gesture on the front, and a yellow stripe down the middle of the back. One of the players commented that his mother had expressed some concern at the wording on the shirt. "I told her that it was the manufacturer's fault, and

that it should have been "Touché!" "

Without doubt there is a conscious intent to be offensive which runs through the language of the rugby subculture. Whenever the team had been drinking at the Downtown Tavern it was quite customary to quit sometime after midnight and go for a meal at a local café, the London Bar and Grill. Those members who felt that it was time to go and eat would announce their intentions by singing a particular song:

> London, London, L-O-N-D-O-N,
> London, London, L-O-N-D-O-N.
> Well, it's greasy and it's sleazy and it's my kind of place,
> And if you don't like it you can sit on my face.
> London, London, L-O-N-D-O-N.

If sufficient numbers of those present joined in the singing, the decision to leave for the café would be taken to be unanimous. The proprietors of the London Bar and Grill would doubtless not have been particularly enamoured with the words of the song, but they certainly enjoyed the team's frequent patronage.

The expression "rugger hugger" was also a popular one with the members of the subculture. The term was sometimes used in a collective sense to refer to any of the women associated with the rugby fraternity. It was more commonly reserved, sometimes in a slightly derogatory way, for single, unattached women who hung aroung with the group. "They had some chicks up in T_____ who were real rugger huggers. Jesus, were they ever rugged. A couple of them could chug faster than anybody I've ever seen. They reminded me of E_____. She goes around and kicks a guy in the nuts and kicks him in the butt. She's married to one of the ruggers up there, but she's a real rugger hugger as far as I'm concerned. She swears and cusses and sings all of the songs." It appeared to be their close approximation of the behaviour of the ruggers which earned these women

this appellation.

Some of the nicknames of the ruggers are also worth recording. Several of these, such as Pig Pen, Tex and Koala, had obvious derivations. Others had been bestowed as a result of incidents which had occurred within the subculture. Mother Goose was one of these, the unfortunate rugger having been chased by a pair of domestic geese on one of the rugby tours, and having emerged rather the worse for the encounter. Another rugger had been wrongly introduced to the group as Fregosi, and the name is still with him today. Others in the group were Coz (or Cozin Willie), Flamer, Knees, Malaria, Maurice (or Little Willie), Rhino, Skip (or Spike), Sweetheart and Torky.

(f) Dress

It was quite common for the ruggers to wear their rugby jerseys on campus or around town, and the green and gold colours were a familiar sight. They were also unique within the university in that they differed from the official university colours and provided a further sense of identity to the team. Unfortunately, these jerseys became available for general purchase at one of the downtown stores, and considerable ill-feeling resulted when several non-ruggers turned up on campus wearing the "team's" jerseys.

In addition, the ruggers had their own jackets, embroidered with the words "Montana Rugby Club," and these were also very popular with the players. It was interesting to note that the early jackets had "University of Montana Rugby Club" on the pocket, but as the non-student ruggers resented the association of the club with the university, the full title was later dropped from the jackets. Club t-shirts were also a common

form of attire, and these were particularly useful on road trips when it was customary to exchange some part of the club apparel with the opposing teams, jerseys being too expensive for this purpose.

(g) Legends

One of the "legendary folk heroes" of the rugby subculture was W_____ R_____, the Irish student who had established the Rugby Club in 1968. The classification of R_____ as a legendary hero may appear somewhat unusual, but it was very difficult to separate fact from fiction when talking to the ruggers about their former coach. R_____, according to the popular version, was born in Dublin, but attended an English public school on a "rugby scholarship." After completing his undergraduate training in that country, he came to Montana and enrolled in the graduate programme in journalism. R_____ stayed about three years in Missoula, until finally his patriotic feelings for his native land got the better of him. He decided to return to Ireland with the express purpose of joining the Irish Republican Army and taking up the fight against the British occupation of Northern Ireland.

I heard this same story from so many people that for a long time I was convinced that it was essentially accurate. During one of my last visits to Missoula, however, I was talking to one of the new ruggers and he happened to mention R_____'s name. I was surprised to hear that he was familar with him, but it transpired that he had been a friend and dormmate of the Irishman's several years before his eventual involvement with the Rugby Club. I asked him if he knew what had happened to R_____ in the years since he had left Missoula, and he replied, "Yes. The most reliable story I've had was that he ended up working on a newspaper in

Wisconsin. He was back in town briefly, recently, but I haven't seen him for a couple of years."

Involvement in the Subculture

In the early years of the Rugby Club's existence, some advertising for new players was attempted through the university student newspaper, the Kaimin. For the most part, however, the established members would recruit additional players from amongst their friends, acquaintances and classmates. The persistence and enthusiasm of the veterans was sufficient to ensure a reasonably steady influx of "rookies," although in the early years many of these did not remain long in the sport. Nevertheless, the club always managed to field a team, albeit on occasions a somewhat bewildered collection of complete newcomers to the game bolstered by a handful of experienced players (cf. McElroy, 1971).

For some of the ruggers with little previous athletic experience, the game provided them with an opportunity to participate in a contact sport for the first time. "I always wanted to play football. I played some flag football in the service, but I never played tackle football. I wanted to try it, but I used to work after school and I didn't get the opportunity. I heard about rugby, and that it was a real tough game, and I thought I'd give it a try." For others, however, the similarity to football was precisely the reason that they felt dubious about becoming involved in the sport. One of the players, whose friends had been attempting to get him to join the team in 1968, finally turned out in 1971. His reluctance to play was based solely on the fact that he "thought the game was too much like football, but after going to the Tavern a couple of times after practices I soon saw that it was totally different in a

lot of ways."

Undoubtedly, there was considerable variety in the motives of the ruggers concerning their decisions to become involved in the sport, but the following account is probably typical of how many of the players were recruited. "I'd been wrestling in college in Idaho for two years, but I'd gone about as far as I could over there. I'd been through high school with S_____, and he was a real good friend of mine. Whenever he'd write, he'd tell me about the rugby trips and the games. It sounded like a real good sport -- you can still have your athletic competition, but it's not as structured and formalized as college wrestling. When I came back to Missoula I went out with S_____ a couple of times and got to know quite a few guys on the team. Early that summer, L_____ came down to play, and as the team was short the guys demanded that I play. I was really anxious to give it a go, so I went out that weekend and played, and fell in love with the game."

Many of the ruggers knew virtually nothing about the game when they first became involved, and their introduction to the game must often have been a confusing experience. One player recalled that he had been participating in intramural basketball during the winter, and the referee happened to be a new member of the Rugby Club. "He came up to me after the game and told me that I played pretty rough and asked me why I didn't try out for the rugby team. I said "Oh, what's that?," but he didn't really know himself because he'd only been to one practice. Anyway, I went out to practice the next day and played the next weekend." Another rugger answered one of the advertisements for players in the Kaimin, attended one practice in company with several other rookies, and then participated in a tournament in W_____ the same weekend. "We got

thrashed, but I really loved the game -- I was converted right from the start." Apparently, it was a case of survival of the fittest, as I met several people in Missoula who looked back with a certain dread at the one and only game in which they had participated, and who had no intention of ever repeating the performance.

For most, however, the physical nature of the game was readily apparent after the first practice, and if they were attracted to this side of the sport their continued participation was likely to hinge upon whether or not they also enjoyed the social activities associated with the game. "I liked the sport, the body contact, and I liked the guys I was playing with. My interest started out with the game, specifically, but they kind of spread out after that. Now it's not just the game or the social side of it. It's real strong aspects of both. I've grown up with athletics all my life and I just don't feel right if I'm not competing in some way. This way you can get the benefits of athletic competition, the physical exercise, plus having the benefit of being able to go out and raise hell whenever you want to."

While some of the ruggers were familiar with the social aspects of the sport when they initially became involved, others were frequently amazed at their first introduction to a rugby party. One of the veterans recalled his initial experience at a post-game function. "I've never seen a group like it. I looked up and saw a guy running across the stage, just naked the first time, and I thought it was quite funny. The next time he ran across he had a burning newspaper sticking out of his rear, and the guys were throwing beer on it to put it out." Some of the ruggers who had played the sport elsewhere initially were well prepared for such behaviour, while a few had experienced similar behaviour in different

contexts. One rookie, an army veteran, commented that "combat soldiers and ruggers have a lot in common. There's a kind of urge to enjoy things while you've got the time, while you've got your youth -- to get up and be wild for a while. I've had this sort of experience before, I fit in well with the ruggers, and I like to party with them." These two aspects of the subculture, the game itself and the social activities, were both vitally important. Although one aspect may have been rated more highly than the other, enjoyment of both was almost a necessary prerequisite for continued participation in the rugby subculture.

Women's Involvement

For many of the women in the rugby subculture, their initial involvement in the social activities of the group was often a somewhat daunting experience. Some of them found the behaviour of the ruggers difficult to cope with initially, and this was accentuated if they were complete strangers to the group. "The first party I went to I was totally wiped out. I didn't like any of the guys I met, and I had a really rough time. C_____ and I had many a fight over that, and often he'd take me home and then go back to the party. It was really hard for me, probably because I'd never been around much at all and had had a sort of sheltered life." This reaction was fairly typical, and undoubtedly there were some women who went to rugby parties once or twice but felt unable to handle the situation and did not return. As often as not, they were considerably embarrassed at first, but their attitude generally underwent a considerable change once they got to know the players.

One of the women described her first introduction to ruggers in another city. "My roommate went to a rugby party, and she came home with

her shirt ripped off and tied around her. The zipper on her shorts was ripped down, and three drunk rugby guys came running into the room after her. That was all I knew about rugby parties. I never went to one in A_____, but I knew how wild they were. Here, the guys are different. They get drunk and get pretty loose, but it's never too bad."

For those women who attended a rugby party unattached, the situation was much more disconcerting than it was for those accompanied by a date. "B_____ thought it was just too gross, and she couldn't handle it at all. She used to come along with R_____ and I, but she was never going with any of the guys. I think that's why she never really got into the group and she finally stopped coming." Certainly, being with a date seemed to provide some feeling of protection and security for the women until they got to know the members of the rugby fraternity and began to feel more at ease. "I got there just after the game had finished, and I'd never even seen a game of rugby. I started to drink, and I thought it was just like any other party. Then some of the guys started taking all their clothes off, and it kind of freaked me out. I didn't know what to think, so I drank some more beer. But I knew D_____ wouldn't take me to a party if he thought that it would harm me or anything, and I've been going to rugby parties ever since."

Once friendships had been established, and the women became more closely acquainted with the other members of the subculture, their perception of the behaviour altered significantly. "To begin with, I didn't like the people, I didn't like the way I was treated, and I had a hard time getting used to it all. But now it's quite different. I get along really well, I've adjusted a lot toward the group, and I really enjoy their company." Not all of the women had feelings of alienation on first

becoming involved in the subculture, however, and soon felt comfortable within the group. "The very first rugby party I went to I was a little embarrassed, but I ignored a lot of things. I really liked the guys — they were a rowdy bunch but they were a lot of fun, and I got on well with the other girls.

Identification and Commitment

One of the outstanding features of the rugby subculture was the strength of identification to the group which was readily apparent, particularly amongst the veterans. Their sense of loyalty towards the subculture was obvious, and the close-knit ties amongst the ruggers and the women became quickly obvious to new members of the group. The amount of social interaction amongst the members was extensive, and this interaction was not confined to the rugby season alone, but continued throughout the year. This strong bond of fellowship was not something to be easily set aside during the off-season, the enduring nature of the relationships providing little support for McElroy's (1971) notion of a "seasonal subculture."

The closeness of the group was a characteristic frequently commented upon, and was a feature that the veterans were particularly conscious of. "There's a real cameraderie, and I think that's great. I've been on a lot of football teams and things where people come together for a specific purpose. You come together to play football, you punch in and punch out, and you don't really see a lot of the other guys. Ruggers run around together, they drink beer together, and I think that's important. I think it's essential for this kind of sport."

New players were soon conscious of the fact that a commitment to

play rugby entailed much more than turning up for practices and games. "When I first joined up with the team, it seemed as though they were a real close group, and there was a lot of social interaction apart from just the games. Once you got into the group you were into an established structure. It was almost like a complete new lifestyle. I was quite surprised."

There were differential levels of involvement within the subculture (cf. Arnold, 1970b). Many members were more active in the social activities of the group than others, and for a hard core of veterans almost all of their leisure time activities revolved around the subculture. For these people, all of their close friends were members of the rugby fraternity, and few had any other outside interests of any consequence. "I think one reason a lot of us play is that it's great being part of a group and having a group you can fit into. Kind of a security blanket type of thing in a way. You've always got people you can be around with, friends, a common thing to talk about, a common denominator when you meet them on the street." Their commitment to the group was quite extraordinary, and the strength of these ties led to feelings of complete solidarity within the subculture. "It's a very close group. I mean, you could curse a guy, his mother, father, or his girlfriend. You could say anything you wanted about him and he knew you were kidding. You could knock him down, tear his shirt off, strip him naked and drag him through the streets, but you were close enough to know that it wouldn't bother him."

Those members who had other interests or who were involved with other groups in addition to the rugby subculture were not committed quite so strongly. One rugger, who was also a member of a fraternity, came

less frequently to the general social sessions during the week. "I don't like to go down to the Tavern all the time, but I like to go occasionally. I usually only come to the actual rugby parties, and the parties with the visiting teams, because I don't like to get drunk all the time. Three or four nights a week is too often for me." For a very few members, their commitment to the subculture was at a much lower level, and they could be regarded as peripheral members only. On occasions, newer members sometimes felt a little alienated from the group. "I didn't really feel excluded, but they've all been together for a long time and they've had a long time to make good friendships. It doesn't bother me, and I've got closer friends outside rugby. But they're good drinking friends and I like the rugby parties."

Most of the women were also impressed by the strength of cohesion within the subculture. "I've never seen a group as close as this in my whole life. It really impresses me. I feel as though I could go anywhere and if I met up with one of the group who's moved away I'd know I'd be able to stay with them. It's just like belonging to a big family." Although this spirit of cameraderie and friendship appears to be a central feature in rugby, it may have been even more dominant in this particular context. The wife of one of the ruggers who had moved to a much larger city in the northwest compared the two situations. "It's different in S_____. Most of the people here are really close friends. Over there they just go out and play the game and get together for a while afterwards, but they're not that close. Of course, it might be that we don't really know them that well yet."

Activities of the Subculture

During the rugby season, it was the normal routine for many of the players, their wives and girlfriends to meet three or four times a week at the Downtown Tavern. The Tavern was owned by one of the members of the Rugby Club during the early 1970's and it became virtually the official "headquarters" of the rugby subculture until a change of ownership late in 1975. The new management redecorated the bar considerably, and the group gradually severed its ties with the establishment. Often the players would leave rugby practice and go downtown for a meal, before drifting along to the Tavern later in the evening. It was quite common for several members of the group to get together on nights other than practice nights as well. As one of the players commented, "You always knew that there'd be someone at the Tavern from about 9:30 p.m. onwards. This time was dedicated to drinking."

The Tavern itself relied quite heavily on the patronage it received from the ruggers and their friends. Quite frequently the only people at the bar in the evenings were people in some way connected with the rugby subculture, and when visiting teams were in town, the Tavern's beer sales rose spectacularly. All of these visiting teams made straight for the Tavern on their arrival in Missoula on the Friday evening, and the pre-game parties usually lasted until closing time. After the games on Saturday and Sunday it was also quite common for the parties to be held at the Tavern, although in good weather outdoor barbeques were often preferred.

The management of the Tavern, especially until the change of ownership in 1975, had always cultivated its association with the rugby

fraternity. During the period when it was owned by one of the players, the Tavern had been painted and decorated by the ruggers, and on one of the walls was a life-size painting of three rugby players forming the front row of a scrum. Photographs, trophies and newspaper clippings on the wall behind the bar made its association with the Rugby Club even more obvious. In addition, the Tavern was usually over-generous in providing "rugby specials" and "kickbacks," and always provided good rates on the kegs of beer purchased for the rugby parties.

The social sessions at the Tavern were not always heavy drinking sessions. Recreational facilities in the bar were very popular, and much of the evening would be taken up with spirited competition in foosball (a table soccer game), pinball and pool. It was also quite common, especially on weekends when no rugby games were scheduled or during the off-season, for a large group to leave the Tavern quite early to go dancing. The most popular place to go was The Barn, an out-of-town dance hall, and these occasions were particularly popular with the women, many of whom were particularly pleased with the opportunity to visit a place which served mixed drinks rather than just beer as was the case at the Tavern. If the social sessions did not culminate in attending a dance, it was customary for all those who were still at the Tavern towards closing time to go for a meal before going home.

While the sessions at the Tavern were perhaps not quite so frequent during the off-season, the place was still a popular haunt for the ruggers. Whenever I returned to Missoula on vacation it was always much easier to make contact with the group by going straight to the Tavern than by trying to reach them by phone, even if my visit occurred during the Christmas vacation. This was the case for all ruggers returning to Missoula, and

inevitably the first stop they made was at the Tavern in order to let the other members of the group know that they were back in town.

The social sessions at the Tavern in the evenings were not the only time that the group got together. It became an established custom for many of the ruggers who were students to meet for lunch or coffee in one of the university cafeterias. Although these gatherings seldom involved more than a small group of members, it was a popular get-together and was a well established point of contact if any of the members wished to get in touch with the rest of the group. Frequently, these sessions served as informal planning sessions for the conduct of the business of the Rugby Club, although the major discussions were usually reserved for "organized" club meetings at the Tavern when all of the non-university members could also be present.

In addition to the pre- and post-game parties during the season and the frequent sessions at the Tavern and university during the off-season, parties were also held on various occasions in the members' homes and apartments. By far the most popular location for these rugby parties was a house in Seven Street, Missoula, which had been the home of a number of ruggers over the years. "Seven Street" was also a frequent refuge for out-of-town ruggers looking for a place to stay, and usually bore the brunt of the billeting for visiting rugby teams. On occasions, non-ruggers had shared the house with rugby players, but the occupants were usually past or present members of the club, and the house was the scene for many of the subculture's social activities.

"Picture parties" were generally held some time after the team returned from any extensive rugby tours, these functions being arranged so that the members could gather to inspect all the photographs which

had been taken during these tours. Another popular function was the "Bottles" party, an annual social event with no specific purpose that I could ever ascertain, but which certainly was one of the wilder and more uninhibited celebrations of the year.

Certain activities were also undertaken to raise funds for the club's touring expenses. Small raffles had been conducted in previous years, but with the initiation of an annual three-week rugby tour during the Spring vacation in 1974, the raffles were conducted on a much larger scale. All of the ruggers, their wives, girlfriends and friends were engaged in the promotion of these raffles, and while the group relied quite heavily on a small core of "super salesmen" everyone contributed something to these major undertakings. In 1974 there were some initial problems concerning the legality of the raffle, but it was nevertheless extremely successful, approximately $1,000.00 being raised in this and each of the subsequent annual raffles. Other fund raising activities were undertaken when the need arose, and were fairly well supported by most of the members.

The Rugby Club was also involved in the intramural sports programme at the university, entering a soccer team in 1973, a softball team in most years, and a highly successful "Wretched Ruggers" wrestling team in 1974. These activities provided further opportunities for the members to come together, although participation was restricted to the ruggers. Wives and girlfriends would often attend as spectators, as they often did at the practice rugby sessions, and this lack of opportunity to participate was probably one of the motivating factors behing the attempt to establish a women's rugby team. The brainchild of a handful of the veterans, the women's team practiced a couple of times a week during the

rugby season, and has now progressed to the stage where it is competing against other women's teams within the state. The idea proved surprisingly popular when it was first introduced, and many of the women took the opportunity to participate. "I think that there are a lot of girls who like the exercise, and I was amazed how many of them actually liked playing the game. We got out and played a few tackle scrimmages and stuff, and they really liked it."

Not all the ruggers were keen for their wives or girlfriends to participate, however. "Down in California, they had a national women's rugby tournament, and a couple of the girls here thought they'd like to play the game. A few of the guys got together and started to practice with these girls, and it was really surprising to me. I thought "Hell, they don't want to play a contact sport like that." But we showed them how to kick and pass, and how to run lines and scrum, and we had a pretty good time. I wouldn't let C_____ try it, but not because I didn't want her playing rugby. It's because her bones are so damn small and she'd get injured pretty easy. Hell, if she got hit wrong, her legs and her arms aren't that big. Besides, I don't think girls are made for body contact like that."

There were many other activities in which the members of the subculture participated together, although these frequently involved smaller groups. Tobogganing, downhill and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing were popular activities during the winter, while fishing and backpacking were very common during the summer months. Occasionally, non-ruggers would accompany these groups, but more often than not repeated interaction in such activities led to these people being recruited for the rugby team and eventually becoming fully fledged members of the subculture. Other

social activities which were popular with the whole subculture were barbeques and picnics, and these functions were generally very well attended.

Discussion

It would seem apparent, from the evidence presented, that there is sufficient justification to refer to the rugby fraternity as a separate and distinct sports subculture. While some of the characteristics of the rugby group are shared with other sports subcultures, there are sufficient differences in the overall picture of the ruggers' world for the members to be able to claim a unique identity. This introduction has detailed the characteristics of the rugby subculture, and has indicated in part where these characteristics are similar to, or differ from, other sports subcultures. It may be worthwhile, however, to briefly examine some further similarities and points of departure between the rugby subculture and other sporting groups.

The heavy consumption of alcohol has long been associated with many sports, and rugby players are by no means unique in this characteristic. What is interesting to note, however, is that traditional initiations for rookies in some team sports feature the forced consumption of alcohol, usually with unpleasant results for the participants (cf. Young, 1974). In recalling his initiation with the Miami Dolphins, professional football player Larry Csonka describes the experience:

> They took us out drinking two nights in a row at a bar down near the ocean. They tried to kill us . . . . They had me and Randall Edmunds chugalugging tequila . . . . On the ninth shot, I upchucked. I hit the barmaid, I turned and hit Stan, I hit some stranger who was just watching, I opened the door and hit a couple walking in. (Csonka and Kiick, 1974: 130-131).

Sample describes a similar situation in another professional football team: "Bobby would take [the rookies] out for a little initiation ceremony. Regardless of whether they were drinkers or not [he] would make them down pitchers of beer until they were completely drunk" (1971: 84).

Heavy drinking seems to be an expected and approved activity, particularly in team sports, and it is seldom condemned by coaches provided that it takes place at the appropriate time. One of the ruggers talked about his prior experiences as an All-Star player on a city baseball team at the age of fourteen. "The first tournament we played in, the coach stopped on the way back at a little grocery store and picked up two cases of beer. There were two or three of us who had never drank before, and we got pretty drunk. It got to the point during the season that the coach would buy us beer for weekends or whenever we wanted it."

The ritualistic strip of the "Zulu Warrior" also has similar counterparts in other sports. One such initiation in hockey is described by Bock: "All rookies brought up to the Bruins experience "The Shave," a rather harrowing initiation ceremony that makes the newcomer one of the boys. "The Shave" is a head-to-toe job done without much concern for the skin of the victim" (1972: 71). This experience, to which the rookies were subjected in Boston, differed from the ruggers' initiation in that the performance always took place in the team dressing room and was thus isolated from public view.

A similar ceremony involving the stripping of the initiates occurred in the University of Texas football teams, with the freshman players being subjected to considerable harassment by the established members of the team:

> They would strip several of us naked and divide us into two groups. Then they would bring out our

> "toy" - an old 45-r.p.m. record. They placed the toy between the cracks of our asses. We had to carry it from one end of the hall to the other without using our hands. We would then have to . . . place it in our teammate's ass. If he happened to drop it, his partner had to pick it up with his mouth, and put it back in place (Shaw, 1973: 39).

Other ceremonial initiations are described by Shaw, and their main purposes, according to the author, were to intimidate the players and to initiate them into a world of unquestioning obedience.

Even more intimidating is the initiation ceremony which football "lettermen" at the University of Oklahoma were forced to endure. The description provided by Rentzel (1973) almost defies the imagination. Throughout the day, the initiates were herded about the campus by lettermen armed with battery-powered cattle prods and forced to perform a variety of activities, most of which were humorous and relatively harmless. The climax of the initiation, however, began in the late afternoon:

> limburger cheese (was) stuffed up our noses and garlic shoved into our mouths. Then they stripped us down to our jockstraps and painted us completely with red paint . . . . They poured glue, the kind that hardens in minutes, into our hair and under our armpits. They sat us down before a dish full of urine and garbage with orders to eat it. And we ate it . . . we swallowed anything, Lydia Pinkham menstrual fluid, shaving cream. They poured wintergreen on our balls and made us rub it in. . . . . This was followed by the grape race: they stuck grapes up.our asses and made us crawl backward on all fours for fifty yards, and the guy who finished last had to eat everyone else's grapes (Rentzel, 1973: 74-75).

Again, in terms of severe discomfort to the participants, the initiation ceremonies in some sports appear to be more dehumanizing than those found in the rugby subculture. Perhaps the most salient difference between football and rugby in respect to norms and customs is that the element of compulsion is notably absent in the latter sport. Pressure was cer-

tainly exerted with regard to conformity to behavioral norms, but it was still possible to belong to the rugby subculture without having to indulge in behaviour or take part in initiations which individual members felt negatively towards.

With regard to specialized language in sports subcultures, Arnold (1972) introduces several terms which have meaning only in the world of the skydiver: "One of the first items of argot the neophyte parachutist learns is the boundary-defining term "whuffo," which refers to non-jumping spectators, and derives from the farmer who inquired "Whuffo you jump outta' them airplanes?" "(1972: 5-6). Another expression within the subculture is "zinging in" which refers to the death of a jumper following parachute failure. Specific language (see also Bouton, 1971) and other unique and identifiable characteristics which clearly separate sports groups into distinct subcultures, would seem to underline the value of individual investigation of such groups as opposed to the analysis of a "generalized sports subculture" advocated by Phillips and Schafer (1971b).

VI

BEHAVIOUR IN THE SUBCULTURE

In the previous introduction to the rugby subculture, certain behavioral patterns have already been indicated. A more detailed examination of the behaviour of the members is necessary, however, if these patterns are to be clearly established and more readily understood. Indeed, if the rugby fraternity does in fact constitute a unique and distinct subcultural entity, and if the commitment of the members to this subculture is as strong as has been suggested, it should be possible for the stranger to identify members of the subculture simply by observing their behaviour in group situations. This chapter examines the behaviour of the members of the rugby subculture, focusing as previously indicated on that behaviour which appears to violate accepted community or societal norms.

Deviant Traditions

Certain deviant behavioral traditions, some with a considerable history and others of much more recent and local origin, are an essential feature of the rugby subculture. One of the most popular and firmly established of these is the obscene song tradition. The songs vary in their content, some probably tracing their historical association back to the English music halls of the early nineteenth century, while others are corrupted versions of more recent popular songs. Few of them, however,

are concerned with the game of rugby. The vast majority of these songs are simply bawdy choruses, having a Chaucerian obsession with basic bodily functions, a humorous sexuality reminiscent of de Balzac, and a coarseness which is perhaps unrivalled in current English literature.

During the post-game parties with visiting rugby teams, it was customary for the teams to indulge in a singing competition, the rivalry to display a greater repertoire of songs being a traditional feature of such functions. The competition was always started by the host team, who would call on the opposition to commence the singing by chanting "We call on _____ to sing us a song, so sing, you bastards, sing!" From this point onwards, the teams would alternate in the singing, and there was considerable prestige attached to victory in these contests. Frequently, the teams would have a small number of "song leaders," but any member could initiate a song, or a new verse to the song being sung, signifying his intention to do so by placing his beer glass on his head.

There are certain rituals built into these song competitions, and penalties were imposed on any member who made a mistake in the lyrics while leading a particular song. Whenever such a mistake occurred, the assembled ruggers would sing a chorus of "Why was he born so beautiful?," followed by a particular rhyme:

> He ought to be publicly pissed on,
> He ought to be publicly shot,
> And tied to a public urinal
> And left there to publicly rot, ROT, ROT,
> So DRINK, you bastard, DRINK -
> Chug-a-lug, chug-a-lug . . . .

The erring member at the conclusion of this chorus was expected to empty his beer glass in one attempt, and the "chugging" chorus would continue until this was successfully achieved. Traditionally, the rugger would then place the empty glass upside down on his head to signify completion

of the task. One consequence of this ritual was that those ruggers who made mistakes quickly became inebriated, leading to further errors and further forced consumption of beer. As a result, those members who were not heavy drinkers seldom attempted to lead the team in song unless pressure was placed on them to do so.

The singing of rugby songs was not necessarily confined to post-game functions with opposition teams, but was generally a feature of the behaviour exhibited whenever members of the subculture gathered together in any reasonable number. Sometimes these social gatherings would be held in the private homes of the members or in rugby club rooms, but more frequently such parties took place in public bars, sports grounds and parks. Consequently, the singing often constituted a "public performance," and for this reason a detailed examination of the songs would appear to be necessary if the likely public reaction is to be estimated.

The songs themselves fall into fairly distinct categories, the most popular within the subculture being those songs concerned with sexual organs and sexual intercourse. Typical of the former was a song entitled "The Ten Wise Men of Montana":

> There were ten wise men with knowledge quite fine,
> To build a great cunt was their design.
> From all of Montana they searched and they sought
> To find the materials to build a great twat.
>
> The first was an axe-man, whose swing was quite swift,
> With double-bit axe, he made a great slit.
> The second was a miner, with drill and with bore,
> He bore and he bore and he made a great pore.
>
> The third was a trapper, quite short and quite stout,
> With marten and beaver he lined it without.
> The fourth was a tailor, quite tall and quite thin,
> With finest red velvet he lined it within.
>
> The fifth was a plumber who whistled with bliss,
> With faucet and washer he made it to piss.

The sixth was a gourmet who worked with great haste,
He threw in a chicken to give it a taste.

The seventh was a fisherman who knew his job well,
With herring and kipper he made it to smell.
The eighth was a drummer with one extra skin,
He stretched and tacked it and made a hymen.

The ninth was a doctor whose hands were quite small,
With ten pounds of vaseline he greased up the wall.
The tenth was a Rabbi, that damned little runt,
He blessed it, he fucked it, and called it a CUNT!

This song was of particular interest in that it had been written by a member of one of the local rugby teams. As the members of this particular team were unwilling to sing it, however, it was quickly adopted by the Missoula ruggers and became one of the "highlights" of their performances in the singing competitions.

One of the most popular songs concerned with sexual intercourse was the "Gang Bang" ballad. It contained a simple chorus -- "When I was younger and in my prime, I used to gand bang all the time. But now I'm older and getting gray, I only gang bang once a day," -- and a selection of verses, many of which were impromptu and were added to the list of established favourites. Mechanical contraptions were also a feature of the songs of the subculture. The "Engineer's Song" was a classic example of the latter, and clearly illustrates a concern with the grotesque (cf. McCarthy, 1970):

An engineer told me before he died,
And I don't know if the bugger lied,
That he had a wife with a cunt so wide
That she could never be satisfied.

And so he built a prick of steel
Driven by a bloody great wheel,
Two brass balls all filled with cream,
And the whole bloody issue was driven by steam.

Round and round went the bloody great wheel,
And in and out went the prick of steel,

Until at last the maiden cried
"Enough, enough, I'm satisfied!"

But this was a tale of the biter bit,
There was no way of stopping it.
She was rent from cunt to tit
And the whole bloody issue was covered in shit.

Certain of the songs were obscene versions of hymns, and one of these, a parody of the "Twelve Days of Christmas," was also one of the most popular of the action songs of the subculture. Retitled the "Twelve Days of Training," the lyrics were as follows:

On the first day of training my C.O. gave to me
A pamphlet on V.D.
On the second day of training my C.O. gave to me
Two shithouse doors and a pamphlet on V.D.

The song continues in similar fashion, with appropriate actions accompanying suitable verses; for example, "Four fucking fools" is sung while making erotic pelvic thrusts towards a partner, "Five fairies" is accompanied by suitable effeminate gestures, while "Seven severed scrotums" is sung in falsetto with the performers making "sawing" motions at the genitals.

Two other songs provide evidence of further classifications, but they were not frequently performed. The first, which could be categorized as one of the songs mocking homosexuals and homosexuality, was particularly short; "For we're all queers together, excuse us while we go upstairs. Yes, we're all queers together, that's why we go round in pairs." The second song was one of the very few which contained any specific reference to the game of rugby. "If I were the marrying kind" is basically concerned with sexual intercourse, but the lyrics are more subtle and less obscene than many of the more popular songs within the subculture.

Another common feature of the behaviour of the ruggers was the traditional welcome with which females new to the subculture were greeted. Any woman attending a social function for the first time would have her attention distracted by one of the ruggers, while one or more of his colleagues would gather behind her and on a prearranged signal proceed to bite her on the buttocks. This particular tradition was of fairly recent origin, and had been introduced to the subculture by one of the members who had seen it performed at a skiing party. On his return to Missoula he had proceeded to demonstrate the activity, and it had quickly gained great popularity with the ruggers.

"Butt biting" was not always restricted to those who were new to the subculture, however, and many of the women had been subjected to this treatment on numerous occasions. One of them described the experience. "The first time I got bitten was when the Montana team came over to S_____, and I got pretty upset because it hurt. They got me again last night, and I should have known better. They had a new angle -- K_____ got all sweet and lovey, and then someone sneaked up behind me. I should have expected what was going on. I don't usually mind the things they do, but that hurts."

Sometimes, perfect strangers became the ruggers' unsuspecting victims. On one more prominent occasion, a river raft race for local sports teams organized by the Chamber of Commerce provided the setting for such an incident. The official starter for the race was the centre-fold beauty for a noted American men's magazine, and one of the ruggers engaged her in conversation before the race commenced. "I was standing there talking to her, and I heard one of the guys behind me say "Bite her on the butt." It seemed like a pretty good idea, so I did. She

became very irate -- I'm not sure whether she hit me or not. She told me I was crude, but I told her that it was an honor to be bitten on the butt by a Montana rugger. Actually, I did it to bring her down to earth -- down to the Montana level. She thought she was supernatural."

A similar incident occurred one evening in the Downtown Tavern when some of the ruggers were playing foosball. During the course of the evening the ruggers had been subjected to some harassment by a young woman who often frequented the Tavern, but who was not known to the group by name. "She was a real Women's Libber, making fun of all the guys and throwing beer on the foosball table. She went over to put some money in the juke box, so we decided to bite her on the butt." The woman reacted quickly to being bitten by throwing a glass of beer over the offending rugger. His response was immediate: "F_____ handed me a pitcher (of beer) and I emptied it all over her. She said she was going to call the cops, and I said "Go ahead. What are you going to get me for -- assault and bitery?" I did bite her a bit hard though, and I got to thinking she might call the police, so I told the guys to say that nobody had seen me and I left. I went down to the parking lot, and the girl and her friend were down there. She had her pants down, and her friend was looking for teeth marks."

Women new to rugby parties were also subjected to further embarrassment during the traditional enactment of a somewhat perturbing but relatively harmless trick. The ruggers would crowd around the newcomer, usually forcing her to back up against a wall, from which position she had little chance of escape. They would then begin to sing "We want your panties" to the tune of a well-known Christmas carol. While this chorus was being endlessly repeated, a couple of the ruggers nearest to the vic-

tim would simulate an attempt to remove her underwear, and to many of the audience unfamiliar with the performance, it appeared as though this was actually being done. After a reasonable interlude, the ruggers would change their chant to "We've got your panties," and one of the woman's "attackers" would triumphantly emerge with the appropriate garment. "We did it to a girl at C_____, and, my God, she was dying. We kept telling her, "It's okay, we won't do anything to you." Then one guy pulled the panties out of his pocket and waved them around. She halfway relaxed then, but she was as nervous as hell and when it was all over she was still shaking in the corner."

At any rugby party with visiting teams, another feature of the behaviour of the ruggers, in addition to the singing competitions, is the performance of sketches or skits. Indeed, at some rugby tournaments, victory on the field of play is not sufficient to capture the tournament trophy. A team may lose more than one game at the tournament, but by their performance in the singing and skits and by their general behaviour at the post-game party they may be adjudged the overall winners of the competition. In teams that were not notably successful on the field, it seemed that there was an added determination to perform well at these after-match functions.

The skits were judged almost entirely on the level of obscenity which they portrayed, although particularly imaginative but less obscene efforts were sometimes rewarded. Some of these performances catch the imagination of the ruggers to the extent that they are adopted and repeated by other teams, becoming traditions within the rugby fraternity. One such skit was the "Dance of the Flaming Assholes" which was first performed by one of the visiting teams at a tournament in B_____. In

this dance, the ruggers are stripped naked, with rolled up newspapers protruding from their buttocks, these newspapers then being set alight. The dance which follows is generally interrupted by audience attempts to douse the flames, usually by throwing beer.

The dance became a popular party trick with the Missoula ruggers, and was often performed in a conscious effort to offend a particular audience. "We got to the party, but it wasn't a real rugby party. It was an everyday run of the mill party, and the place was quite crowded. It was a small house, too, and we decided to liven the party up a bit. Four of us went out into the garage and took our clothes off and got some newspapers. We ran around the house and through the house and fired the place up a bit. Then we went back to the garage and put our clothes back on. By the time we got back into the house there were just the ruggers left. It had emptied the party."

Certain opposition teams were noted for their traditional party tricks, one of the club sides being renowned for their performance of the "Elephant Walk." In this exercise, the ruggers are again stripped naked, and form a long line with the leader holding on to the penis of the rugger behind him, and so on throughout the line. Whistling the "Baby Elephant Walk," the ruggers then amble slowly about the room. Party tricks such as these are not confined to private celebrations, and often take place in public bars. "They all changed in the men's room and came out whistling. They went right through the bar, and then went outside and around a couple of parking meters before coming back inside. While they were outside, someone had poured beer over all their clothes, so they stayed stripped for a while."

Another of the opposition teams was noted for its pre-game ritual.

The players would line up and file onto the field behind one of the group who was a Scotsman, the latter appropriately dressed in his native costume and playing the bagpipes. On their first visit to Missoula, the visitors considerably impressed the spectators with this performance, and were given a generous round of applause. On reaching the centre of the field, however, the team formed a circle around the piper, pulled down their shorts, and exposed their bare buttocks to the crowd. The ritual was particularly well received, and became a popular trademark of the visitors.

The "sandwich" was a popular innovation of one of the western rugby clubs. This routine called for two ruggers to squeeze one of the women between them and simulate sexual intercourse. While this disturbed some of the women at the parties, it was considered by most to be preferable to some of the other forms of attention that they received. "The first time two guys sandwiched me I didn't like it at all, but then I realized that if you got upset they'd keep on doing it. Anyway, it's better than being bitten on the backside."

Rugby Parties

The general behaviour of the ruggers at rugby parties, in common with the rugby songs, skits and other traditional activities, features a blend of the obscene, the humorous and the bizarre. That their behaviour during combined parties with opposition teams was influenced by a desire to dominate the centre of attention cannot be underestimated. "I think that the attitude is that we've got to win every party. I know people are looking for things to do when they go to them. The games are only fifty per cent and partying is the other fifty per cent. When we went to

D_____ and lost the game, I couldn't believe how we partied."

Beer drinking relay competitions, or "boat races" as they are commonly termed, are traditional at the post-game functions, but the Missoula team seldom fared well in these contests. In one of their more bizarre performances, however, the team finally managed a victory in this prestige event during a tournament in L_____. "There were a lot of grasshoppers out on the field, and someone suggested that we fill our pockets up with them and save them for the party. We decided to use them during the boat race. Just before it was our turn to chug, we'd eat a grasshopper. I was the second one in the line. I threw the grasshopper in my mouth and started chewing on it, and then I drank my beer. It bothered the other team more than us -- we only just beat them, but they could have won except they were so busy watching us it slowed them down. They just couldn't believe it."

The unfortunate grasshoppers provided much of the entertainment for the remainder of the evening, and were certainly a highlight of the party. "Some of the guys would go and talk to a girl. They'd sit there and hold a grasshopper and talk to her for a while. Then they'd bite off the grasshopper's head and take a drink, and keep talking as if nothing had happened. One of the girls just sat there saying, "Oh, my God!" It freaked her all to hell, and in the finish she couldn't take it any more and left. They were just doing it for a joke, and I thought it was really funny. Everybody got into it. We'd eat the grasshoppers and then hop up and down like grasshoppers. We wanted to do something more than anyone else, and we really stole the show."

Imaginative efforts, such as the above, were not uncommon, although in an attempt to win the party the ruggers would more frequently resort to

behaviour which was more blatantly obscene. "Up at T_____ we did a version of "Ghost Riders in the Sky" for our skit. A couple of guys were the horses and B_____ was the girl being raped. The rest of us hummed the tune in the background while D_____ recited a poetic rendition entitled "Cunt Riders in the Sky." But it looked like we might not win, so a whole lot of us went up on the balcony above the stage and sang "Montana" and hung our penises over the edge of the railing."

Seldom did a rugby party conclude without at least one of the teams stripping off their clothes. Although this frequently happened later in the evening, it was not necessarily connected with a loosening of social restraints following heavy consumption of alcohol. After one tournament an outdoor barbeque was held at a nearby farm, and the evening began with a flourish. "The team from E_____ came driving down the highway on an old, red Hudson. The whole lot of them were naked. Guys were hanging on the running board, and one guy was posed on the front like a hood ornament. The prairie is so flat around there that you could see them coming from what seemed like miles away. One of the other teams tried to steal their thunder. There was a big grain silo there, and they climbed up to the top and started pissing on the crowd. But these guys from E_____ were really well prepared -- they'd brought pea shooters with them. They were good shots, too, and they won the tournament hands down."

Occasionally, the performance of the Missoula team at the rugby parties appeared to even shock the opposition ruggers. This was especially so if the opposition team was a relatively newly established rugby club. That some of the team's "best" efforts were reserved for such occasions can be readily explained. There was considerable ill-feeling

among many of the ruggers towards football players, and this animosity was even more pronounced towards those football players who were newly converted to rugby. Such teams, at least initially, generally brought a very serious and highly competitive approach to their adopted game. The lengths to which the Missoula ruggers would go to make a mockery of such an attitude were quite extraordinary. The road trip to C_____ provided a typical example of such behaviour, the ruggers virtually destroying the competitive atmosphere at the beginning of the game. "We decided that all our forwards would kiss their forwards in the first scrum. They thought they were super-jocks and they were all serious, so we just went to the other extreme. We even whistled rugby tunes in the lineouts."

Their behaviour after this particular game was influenced considerably by the fact that they had been quite heavily defeated on the rugby field, and inhibitions were thrown aside in an attempt to dominate the celebrations. "The party started in a park. We had the kegs on a picnic table and we were singing the grossest songs we knew. A cop drove by a few times and we were giving him the fingers. Finally, he stopped and came over. There was a big chimney on one of the barbeque ovens, and three of us climbed up it and started "shooting" at him. He told us that we'd have to leave because we were making too much noise in a public place, but he was pretty timid about it. We were very cooperative though, and left."

The party was then reconvened at a private home, and the festivities became even more uninhibited. At one stage during the evening, the telephone rang and someone jokingly informed one of the Missoula ruggers that the call was for him. He went over to the telephone, promptly removed the instrument from its attachments, and took it outside to his

car. Later in the evening, one of the ruggers cut a hole in the pocket of his jeans and pulled his penis through the opening so that it protruded from his pocket. He then proceeded to show the assembled ruggers and women what he had "found out on the field today." In the dim light it was difficult to determine the exact nature of the object protruding from his pocket, and many in the audience would grasp hold of it and bend down to examine it, most of them recoiling with visible shock when the "object" had been successfully identified.

Their determination to display the "true rugby spirit" was evident. "I think we have a very good social attitude in this way, and I think we also promote a good rugby image. Like when J_____ had his dick sticking out of his trouser pocket. That was great. Later on he put his hand in his other pocket and had his finger sticking out the hole. The guys would get down and suck on it, and everybody thought it was his dick they were sucking and they were completely freaked out. I can remember the [opposition] players and their girlfriends standing in the corner saying, "God, do you believe these guys, do you really believe them?" It just sort of fed the fire, and I think it was the best party we ever had."

Sometimes the ruggers would enliven a party with what they referred to as their "queer act." This performance was often reserved for those occasions to which "outsiders" had been invited. Should any of these people unfamiliar with the rugby fraternity show any signs of disgust at the general behaviour of the ruggers, the latter were quick to seize the opportunity to further embarrass these guests. "Quite a few of the opposition had brought their wives along, and several of the wives had brought along friends. One of these women turned out to be a "narc," so we really turned it on. We'd grab each other's thighs and hold hands

and kiss, and they were really taken aback. We really had them convinced that we were queer."

Some of the ruggers were considerably less inhibited in their behaviour than other members of the group, and would often take great pride in the performance of bizarre and grotesque acts, regardless of the particular audience. One such example occurred at a small, private party which was attended only by the local ruggers. In the early hours of the morning, the ruggers discovered the carcass of a dog which one of the occupants of the house had procured in order to obtain the skeleton for teaching purposes. A game of rugby with the dog's head ensued, the head eventually ending up on the roof of the house. One of the ruggers climbed onto the roof, ended the game by drop-kicking the head to the ground whereupon it smashed, and completed his "act" by defecating down the chimney.

This same rugger gained further notoriety during a tournament in C_____. In one of the games at this tournament, a player in the host team had upset many of the Missoula ruggers with his dirty play which culminated in his kicking one of the visiting players in the head as he lay on the ground. The party after the game was held in the house of the offending rugger, and there was considerable ill-feeling between the Missoula players and their host. Some form of retribution was almost to be expected. "I decided to pay him back for kicking M_____ in the head, so just before we left the party I went inside and shit in his bathtub."

One of the veteran ruggers in the team was also noted as one of the group's best song leaders. While he performed an invaluable service to the team in the singing competitions, he would frequently become the butt of good-natured harassment from his peers because of his penchant

for initiating a particular song which most of the ruggers disliked singing. Whenever he attempted to lead the team in this song, the ruggers would frequently drown him out with a chorus of "Why was he born so beautiful?" At one particular rugby party, the veteran's insistence on singing his particular favourite eventually brought a more dramatic reaction from one of his teammates. "I was standing there singing, and all of a sudden I felt something hot and wet running down my leg. C_____ was standing beside me with a big grin on his face calmly pissing on me."

Deviant Behaviour in Public Places

Most of the pre- and post-game parties and the general social activities of the ruggers took place in local bars which were well known as the gathering places of the various rugby clubs. Generally, there was considerable tolerance exhibited by the management of these bars toward the behaviour of the ruggers, although this was less so in those towns where newer clubs were just beginning to establish themselves. In a true "rugby" bar it seemed almost impossible to behave in a manner sufficiently obscene or troublesome so as to result in eviction from the premises, although this did occur infrequently.

The ruggers would deliberately test out the management of those bars in towns where they had not previously played, and would attempt to impose their own standards of behaviour. "One town we went to just wasn't ready for a rugby party. We went to this fairly classy restaurant which was sponsoring the opposition team. Everybody was pretty well drunk after a three hundred and fifty mile trip. A lot of the opposition were new to the sport. They hadn't played much, but they were game for anything, so we started singing. Two or three tables of people got up and left right

away in the middle of their meal. The guy who was in charge that night told us to stop or get out, but M_____ told us that the owner, who was a friend of his, had said that anything goes. We decided to cool it a bit and take it easy, and we left soon after that, after finishing the meals of the people who'd walked out."

Often, the performances of the ruggers in the bars would receive positive encouragement from the audience. During one tournament in W_____, the management in several bars reacted quite strongly against the singing and general rowdy behaviour of the team, but the reaction of the patrons in these places were considerably different. "I just happened to be drinking a screwdriver at the time. This old lady at the bar said she didn't want hers and gave it to me, so I drank it and they all thought that that was what I was drinking. They started buying us screwdrivers -- we'd sing them another song and they'd buy us another round. They just loved it. They were all good rugby songs -- all very gross -- that's what they enjoyed about it."

A similar incident occurred when the team first travelled to H_____. The ruggers patronized several bars during the course of the evening, eventually wearing out their welcome. "We hit every bar two or three times, and one bar quit serving us. They wanted to get us out of there, so we left. We went down across the main street, right through the middle of the intersection, and held up all the traffic. We went into another bar singing "God Bless America" and this one guy bought us all a round. We sang "For he's a jolly good fellow" and a few good rugby songs, and then we marched across the street to another bar. He eventually followed us over there and bought us another round."

In the local Downtown Tavern, the ruggers had no inhibitions what-

soever, and strangers in the audience seemed prepared to accept whatever took place. One of the ruggers gave a not untypical account of a mid-week episode at the Tavern. "We were just sitting there drinking for a while, and pretty soon we started to get drunk. People started singing and dancing on the tables and the bar. J_____ and I did a "Zulu" on the bar. Then we started humping away and squealing, and this girl came in and she looked disgusted. She'd just had her hair done up nice and curly, and J_____ winked at me and nodded toward a pitcher. I didn't know her at all, but I went up to her and poured the pitcher all over her. She got mad at first, and she looked around as if she couldn't believe it. But she didn't do anything. She just sat down and proceeded to get drunk."

On one occasion during a tournament, the ruggers were billeted in a building owned by the Students' Association of a university in W_____. "We were staying upstairs and there was a really straight party going on downstairs when P_____ and I got back. They were all in tuxedos and formals, and we joined the party but they told us we had to go upstairs. So we went upstairs, stripped off, and came downstairs again. We wandered through the party singing "Lloyd George knew my father." They were pretty scandalized, but it didn't bother me. I really enjoyed it, and the only reason they got picked on was because of their attitude. Later on, when the others got back about eight of us stripped off and marched slowly through the party with our hands on the shoulders of the guy in front. They threatened to call the cops and said "Who's in charge here?" We told them J_____ was, but he was so drunk he just smiled and they couldn't get any real response out of him. The guys were all making the biggest fuss. I think they were probably trying to protect their girlfriends. A couple

of girls got up and hid, but most of them just sat there and smiled."

The ruggers seemed to delight in creating a public spectacle of themselves. The intent to shock, to make a mockery of, and to generally disregard traditional standards of behaviour was always present. An incident in C_____ provided a typical example of this general attitude. "We were pretty far gone and we called a cab. We were going down a three lane one-way street, and a wedding car pulled up beside us at a stop sign. C_____ asked the taxi driver if he could roll down the window. The driver says "Sure," so he rolls it down, drops his pants and hangs a moon at these newlyweds. The driver is really embarrassed, and he takes off, but he doesn't say anything. He's just sitting there looking straight ahead and hoping that we'll get out soon. The next stop sign, there's a cop between us and the wedding party. The groom starts talking to the cop and the taxi driver could see that he was pointing over at us. C_____ asked him if he could roll the window down again, and the taxi driver just took off as fast as he could and turned at the next corner."

A further example of such behaviour occurred one Saturday night in Missoula during a visit by one of the neighbouring club sides. Four of the visiting ruggers, in the back of a small truck driven by one of their teammates, spent about an hour driving around the main streets of the town periodically dropping their trousers and "mooning" the startled pedestrians. The incident almost ended in disaster when the truck cornered rather sharply in the midst of one such performance, and three of the ruggers were thrown over the side. Fortunately, aside from the loss of some skin from their buttocks, the ruggers suffered no serious injury.

Behaviour Towards Women

In the preceding sections it can be seen that the ruggers' behaviour towards women, both within and outside of the subculture, can only be regarded as consistently offensive. The obscene song tradition vilifies women, and several of the traditions within the subculture are specifically calculated to shock, embarrass and upset the opposite sex. Nevertheless, women were by no means excluded from membership in the rugby subculture, and were permitted to take part in all of its activities. Several of the women claimed a lengthy association with the group, being readily accepted as veterans by the ruggers, and a number of them would join in certain traditional activities such as the singing of rugby songs. Their presence at most of the social functions was generally expected by their husbands and boyfriends, but they often spent much of the time in a group by themselves. Generally, the women adopted the role of passive spectators, and they could be regarded as a peripheral group within the rugby fraternity.

A vast majority of the ruggers were single, and most of these, especially the veteran members, had steady girlfriends. A few of the younger ruggers brought dfferent dates to various social functions, while a small number seldom appeared at any of the activities of the subculture with a female companion. Most of the ruggers who were unattached were fairly selective with regard to the women whom they invited to attend a rugby function, and they were usually careful to warn their dates what they could expect to take place at their first attendance at a party. "I suggested to her that she might stand against the wall sometimes. She wanted to know why, and I told her she'd find out -- I just

wanted her to remember I'd warned her when it happened. We talked about it afterwards, and she didn't mind all the drinking or the "X-rated" songs, but she didn't like getting bitten on the butt, though."

The younger, unattached members appeared to feel somewhat restricted if they brought a date along to a rugby party, and were often a little afraid that the experience might damage their relationship with their companion. "I used to take my girlfriend along once in a while, but she thought it was gross. She's pretty puritanical, and she didn't get off on the butt biting and stuff like that. I think if I was still going with her she probably would have enjoyed it a little more as time went on and she got to know everybody. The thing is, when I'm at a rugby party I figure that's the time for me to cut loose and do what I want. I'd just as soon not bring a girl who wants a lot of attention because I'd sooner roam free and have a good time."

Undoubtedly, if a rugger was particularly keen on establishing a relationship with a woman, it had considerable influence on his behaviour at any of the social functions they attended together. "The two parties I've taken N_____ to I've not taken much part in the singing and all the rest of it. I hadn't been going with her very long when I took her to these parties, and we were still in the stage of feeling out each other's personalities. There were still a lot of things we didn't know about each other, and there are some things that are going to take more preparation for her to get used to. Eventually, I'll probably behave much the same as I did before."

The fact that some of the individuals were particularly noted for their general harassment of the wives and girlfriends of their peers had the effect of making them considerably dubious about the wisdom of bring-

ing along a partner of their own to the rugby parties. "There would probably be about four of five players like myself who wouldn't take a girl to a party. I have a feeling that if I took a girl she would be much more prone to being bit on the butt and chased around and generally harrassed. In fact, she'd probably get massacred. I've led the assault on so many other girls that the retribution would be pretty terrible."

Similar fears were expressed by one of the other veterans who had maintained a strongly uncommitted stance toward women for some time. When he finally became quite serious in his intentions towards a young woman, he was most reluctant to introduce her to his fellow ruggers. "I've bitten so many other people's girlfriends on the butt and given so many of them a bad time that now all the guys would figure it's their turn. I finally took P_____ along to a party, and I figured she was going to get bit anyway so I thought I might as well set her up for it. I carried her round on my back, carried her right through the middle of the party, holding her legs at my sides. I set her up perfectly. She got a little bit upset when she got bitten, but I'd told her it was going to happen and I think she'd resigned herself to the fact."

Despite the unwelcome attention that the women frequently received, this did not seem to be a great deterrent to their continued participation in the activities of the subculture, even if their reactions differed somewhat. As one of the ruggers commented, "I think R_____ will get used to it, just like the others have. Take somebody like F_____ -- she's been going with D_____ for a long time, and she knows what's going on. She's got the kind of personality where she just accepts it all, but she gives D_____ a bad time when he gets too obnoxious. L_____, on the other hand, just shrugs her shoulders, tries to figure how to get it all

over with, and hopes P_____ doesn't make too much of a fool out of himself before they leave."

The novelty of the behavioral traditions and the stories that were legend about the activities of the rugby subculture, seemed to have the effect of arousing considerable curiosity amongst "outsiders." Women often expressed a desire to attend a rugby function, although for many it seemed that such a desire was tempered by a certain reserve, and it appeared that they would be more comfortable in the "voyeuristic" role of a complete observer. They wanted to watch, to "experience," but not to participate. "A lot of girls want to go to rugby parties because they've heard so much about them. I know of five or six who've approached me. I don't really tell them too much -- I tell them about the good times and perhaps some of the things that we do when we get drunk. Maybe I lead them on a little bit. They always want me to take them along next time we have a party."

It was interesting to note that while the ruggers indulged in behaviour which was often obscene and offensive, they were not particularly appreciative if any of the women performed in a similar manner, an attitude which would suggest that the behaviour of these women was seen to represent a challenge to masculine domination of the subculture. Occasionally, on road trips the team would meet up with women whose uninhibited behaviour was a match for their own. "Some of them swear and sing all the songs and join in the skits and things like that. It really turns me off. I don't like women who act like that. If a woman was halfway decent she would act halfway decent. I know how I act, and I know I act like a turd, but I sure wouldn't like to go out with a girl who acts like me!"

The ruggers also exhibited considerable solidarity in that they tended to resent the advances of any woman who was associated with one of their colleagues, especially where this association was in the nature of a permanent relationship. There was considerable ill-feeling towards one of the women who frequently ignored her partner at rugby functions. As one of the ruggers commented, "Every party she was doing the hustling, and she was hustling other girls' boyfriends. One night she was hustling me -- she comes on strong and it's obnoxious the way she does it. She doesn't try to hide anything. There would be a party, and she'd come with L_____, but she'd have her arms around everyone else and end up going home with another guy. That really burned me up. The trouble was L_____ liked her so much that I don't think he could bring himself to tell her to hit the road."

Such an attitude would again suggest some resentment towards role reversal with regard to the position of women within the subculture, although the ruggers themselves were remarkably loyal to their wives and girlfriends. Even on road trips it was generally only the unattached ruggers who "played around," and the traditional stop at a legalized brothel in Nevada during the annual rugby tour usually attracted only those members who were uncommitted. As one of the wives commented, "It's really ironic, but a lot of the rugby guys ended up taking out really straight women. They seem to like straighter women. They meet girls in the bars, and some of them are pretty loose, but very few of the guys go for them."

Discussion

Deviant traditions are not uncommon in other sports subcultures,

some of these having been previously discussed (see e.g. Rentzel, 1973; Shaw, 1973). In the world of professional baseball, one of the popular pastimes of many of the players was the tradition referred to as "beaver-shooting." According to Bouton:

> A beaver-shooter is, at bottom, a Peeping Tom. It can be anything from peering over the top of the dugout to look up dresses to hanging from the fire escape on the twentieth floor of some hotel to look in a window. I've seen guys chin themselves on transoms, drill holes in doors, even shove a mirror under a door (1971: 36).

Bouton maintains that the activity was conducted almost "scientifically," and that "if you shoot a particularly good beaver you are a highly respected person, one might even say a folk hero" (1971: 37). Further evidence as to the popularity of "beaver shooting" in baseball is provided by Allen (1974). On one occasion, a current "Miss Universe" was occupying a hotel room adjacent to one of the players. "Dalkowski drilled twenty holes in the wall, all at different levels, the entire length of the wall. . . . By ten o'clock . . . a dozen Oriole players had gathered. . . . One of them carried a flashlight so that his beaver shooting would not end at lights out" (1974: 51-52).

Uninhibited behaviour at parties is certainly not confined to the rugby subculture, although it would appear that in many sports the parties are more likely to be held in private places, and there seems less evidence to suggest that deviant or obscene "traditions" are a feature of such occasions. Football parties feature heavy drinking and uninhibited sexual behaviour:

> The parties make most of the early Fellini movies look like Baby Snooks. The best parties are always held where there is lots of booze and food and good-time people. The especially intimate parties the wives never find out about, except maybe when lipstick

> traces mysteriously appear on the guys' shorts (Barnes, 1973: 185).

This description emphasizes a further point of departure between the behaviour of football players and members of the rugby subculture. The married ruggers were always accompanied by their wives at local parties, a situation somewhat different from that found in football circles. As Barnes comments, "Many of the guys who were married took their wives home and picked up other little friends before making it back to the party" (1973: 188).

That this is not uncommon in professional football is substantiated by Meggyesy (1971). In talking about one of the favourite training camp hang-outs of the St. Louis Cardinals, Meggyesy claims that:

> most players who went to Butch's . . . began looking for a warm feline body to cuddle up with for the rest of the evening. Before starting out, most of the married guys who wore wedding rings would slip them into their pockets. Don Brumm once made the mistake of [bringing] his wife . . . and three years later the guys still hadn't let him live it down (1971: 105).

In addition to heavy drinking, exhibitionism also appears to be a feature common to both football and rugby parties. In recounting his experiences with the Miami Dolphins, Kiick recalls that "one party, when we walked up to the front door, some guy was standing at the window with no clothes on" (Csonka and Kiick, 1974: 125). However, it seems certain that the traditional and ritualistic violation of taboos against nakedness is a feature unique to the rugby subculture.

It would also appear that the incident in which the Missoula ruggers kissed the opposing players as a reaction to the "super-jock" and super-masculine image projected by their opponents has a precedent in baseball. As Bouton describes it, "The idea was to sneak up to some

hairy guy and kiss him -- on the lips. It seemed rather fun at the time. I mean fun because it was disconcerting" (1972: 76). Comparative situations within other sports can also be found for other incidents which occurred within the rugby subculture. Barnes claims that in football, commonplace activities in the locker room include "whipping [your buddies] with wet towels and urinating on their legs" (1973: 114).

A general attitude of "woman as object" observed in the rugby subculture in other countries (cf. Laidlaw, 1973; Sheard and Dunning, 1973) seems to be common in many male sports groups in America. While such an attitude is obvious within the rugby subculture, it may be an even more common feature in the established and traditional sports. Allen's (1974) description of an incident in baseball emphasizes the superficiality of some of the sexual affairs of the players: "I'd latch on to one of those Southern mamies . . . . You'd knock them off in the back seat of the car and they'd pull over and buy a bottle of Seven-Up . . . and use it for a douche" (1974: 35).

A similar attitude towards women and sexual relationships is apparent in professional tennis, as evidenced by Terkel's interview with a professional woman tennis player:

> Male athletes are just big studs. The girl tennis players used to laugh. A couple of Australians got this little game they'd play. They'd pick up girls and they'd rig it up so one guy would watch from the next room -- and give points. They kept track. They made it a contest (1975: 496).

Although incidents such as these appear to be commonplace occurrences in the established sports, the same could not be said for behaviour within the rugby subculture. Women were seldom regarded merely as objects of sexual gratification, and only isolated incidences would suggest an atti-

tude to the contrary. It must be remembered, however, that the opportunity for such superficial and impersonal sexual gratification is far greater in the established sports. While the rugby subculture has its "rugger huggers," they were not in any way comparable to the "groupies" or "camp followers" found in professional sport. As Taylor has remarked, "being an athlete puts you in stud heaven. Secretariat should have it so good. There is never, but never, a shortage" (Young, 1974:77).

One feature which requires some comment is that the vandalism described as a central component of behaviour in rugby circles in other countries (see e.g. Laidlaw, 1973; Sheard and Dunning, 1973) was not at all common within the rugby subculture. Isolated examples of the wanton destruction of property did occur, but damage was generally restricted to accidental breakages of beer glasses and pitchers. The deliberate destruction of property described by rugby commentators elsewhere may be a further example of behaviour characteristic of athletes in established or professional sports -- it does not seem to be uncommon in football or baseball (see e.g. Bouton, 1971; Barnes, 1973; Shaw, 1973; Allen, 1974; Csonka and Kiick, 1974) -- rather than a characteristic of the behaviour of rugby players <u>per se</u>.

VII

REACTION TO THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE MEMBERS

In analyzing the reaction towards the behaviour of the members of the rugby subculture, the frame of reference for this study requires that two aspects of this reaction be taken into account. Initially, the reaction within the subculture is examined in order to determine how the individuals themselves view their own behaviour and that of their fellow members. An attempt is made to determine whether behaviour which appears to violate accepted community standards is regarded as "deviant" within the subculture. Secondly, public reaction to the behaviour of the members of the subculture is considered, the various significant aspects of this reaction being separately analyzed. In order to indicate whether the larger community views any of the characteristic behaviour within the subculture as deviant, an examination is made of the consequences related to such behaviour.

Reaction Within the Subculture

Not all of the members of the subculture actively participated in all of the traditions, rituals and activities which were features of the behaviour of the group, the women in particular normally adopting the role of passive observers. For the ruggers, however, a disinclination to take part in any of these activities was highly unlikely if subcultural membership was to be retained. While some of the ruggers seemed com-

pletely uninhibited in their behaviour, others would display a more "conservative" attitude. However, while the latter may have refrained from active participation in certain aspects of subcultural behaviour, they seldom expressed disapproval and more frequently encouraged and abetted their peers.

With regard to the heavy consumption of alcohol, the members readily accepted this as a normative feature within the subculture, although not all of the members were heavy drinkers themselves. While many within the group became highly inebriated at most of the rugby social functions, there was always a number of individuals whose consumption of alcohol could be termed as moderate. Even those members who drank relatively little in comparison to their colleagues were seldom critical of the behaviour of other members of the group, and it was rare indeed for concern to be expressed with regard to the amount of alcohol consumed. Only in one recorded instance did any of the ruggers evince such an attitude. "We were driving to a tournament in D_____, and there were four of us in the car. We went through two cases of beer in the first two hours, and then we stopped for more beer and a pizza. I was getting pretty drunk, and then I found out it was my turn to drive. The guys all do this, and I hesitate to question it on the basis that they all seem to be surviving doing it. But it doesn't seem to be a very wise thing to drink so much when you're driving. That's probably the thing that bothers me the most about the road trips; it seems to be really dangerous." Generally, however, this was not an issue which provoked any comment within the subculture, and heavy drinking could hardly be regarded as deviant within this context.

The singing of rugby songs was one activity in which the ruggers

participated almost without exception, and they were completely unperturbed about performing these songs in public places. Some of the ruggers had experienced similar traditions in different social contexts. "I've heard songs like these before when I was in the army. They were similar, although the humor was a lot blacker. Like there was one song, sung to the tune of "Johnny Come Marching Home" which was about sending you home from the fighting in a plastic bag."

The wording of these songs certainly did not excite any negative response from the ruggers, the more obscene the lyrics the more likely the song was to achieve popularity within the subculture. Action songs accompanied by obscene gestures were highly regarded, and these were often selected deliberately for performing in front of a strange audience. As one of the ruggers commented, "The content really doesn't matter. My fiancée is a ballet major in college and she's been studying theater. She's heard a lot of the songs before, and most of them aren't "rugby" songs at all. They're not something that just rugby players sing, so I don't think they're anything to get uptight about." Undoubtedly, the obscene song tradition is so firmly entrenched within the rugby subculture that failure to participate in the singing would be far more likely to be regarded as "deviant" within the confines of the group.

The regular violation of taboos against nakedness, however, did elicit a somewhat more mixed reaction within the subculture. None of the ruggers expressed disapproval towards rituals and traditions involving public nudity, although some of them did have some misgivings about their own participation in such activities. "A lot depends on how drunk I am. It's the sort of thing that you do within the confines of your own group and it helps the unity of the group, but I've got to be pretty

drunk to do it in public." Further evidence has already been presented which suggests that, at least initially, many of the ruggers felt it was necessary for them to overcome their inhibitions concerning public nudity by first becoming intoxicated.

It seemed, however, that such inhibitions diminished with continued participation in the activities of the group. "The first time I stripped off was when we danced the "Beer Barrel Polka" in the nude up at L_____. I was drunk, and it didn't bother me -- I sort of liked it. I think it's easy to get involved in these things, especially when you've had a few beers. You don't worry about it and it's a hell of a joke anyway. If there's nobody there but rugby people it's a lot different. But once you've been to a few parties and seen everybody running around naked and getting away with it, you start to lose your inhibitions anyway."

None of the behaviour within the subculture seemed to be viewed negatively by the members, the "deviant" traditions being accepted as normative behaviour for the group. It has already been noted, however, that behaviour which is acceptable in a particular social situation may be regarded in a different light in other social settings, and it would seem that the ruggers themselves were fully aware of such an anomaly. If they were comfortable with their behaviour while in the company of fellow ruggers, they accepted that such behaviour was not appropriate for all occasions. As one of the veterans commented, "You know, I've got three or four different personalities. Like the rugby personality, and a "home body," and a go-out-with-a-girl personality, and stuff like that. I think everybody's much the same. For example, I don't hide anything from my parents about what goes on at the rugby parties -- it's just that they've never asked me and I've never told them."

Some of the ruggers were concerned that friends would have difficulty in understanding much of the behaviour within the subculture. "I wouldn't want some of them to come along to a rugby party. I don't really think they would understand or appreciate what goes on. I don't get off much on the butt biting routine myself. I've done a lot of things I wouldn't want some of my friends to see. Well, I don't really care whether they see me or not, I just don't think they'd understand the whole behaviour thing -- either because they've never participated in sport, or because they couldn't adjust to the radical change in your behaviour when you're with the group."

Others within the group acknowledged that their parents were aware of the general tone of the behaviour in the rugby context, "They know we raise a lot of hell and get pretty crude. I think they know that I've done some pretty crazy things, some stuff that's really not too bright. But if I get into trouble doing it, then I'm the one who's going to have to face the consequences." Another player commented similarly on his parents' attitudes. "They'd probably be pretty shocked at the rugby parties, but I tell them most of what goes on and they seem to go along with it without getting uptight. I wrote to them and told them about dancing the "Beer Barrel Polka" naked at the party in L_____, and I got a card back with a little mirror in it so that I could take a good look at myself."

It was readily apparent from certain comments that some of the ruggers would have been somewhat inhibited in their behaviour if certain of their friends had been in attendance, yet no such reserve was present when the group was "performing" in front of strangers or in the presence of the general public. It seemed that the degree of anonymity in such

situations had much to do with this, their identity on these occasions being that of a "rugger" rather than of the individual. The general attitude of the members towards their behaviour in such circumstances is summed up by a characteristic statement from one of the veterans. "I don't think it's just the drinking, I think it's just trying to shock people. A lot of people are scared of running around naked and things like that. I think a lot of the times we do it just to see their reaction. After we do it we just sit around and laugh at the expressions on people's faces."

There is much evidence to suggest that this statement is typical of the prevailing attitude amongst the ruggers. That they were fully conscious of the fact that their behaviour, while viewed as normative within the subculture, was likely to be viewed quite differently by strangers, seemed to provide a partial explanation for their performances in public. "An audience makes a big difference, and there's much less hell-raising if we have a house party. We used to do more down at the Tavern because there were more people there to shock. And especially if we're somewhere where the audience is critical of us. We pick on these people because of their attitude. We do some crazy things -- a lot of "mind fuck" -- and we do it just to upset them. I've discussed this with some of the other guys, and they agree that some of these things we probably wouldn't do if we were just by ourselves. It's just that we feel that some of these people deserve to be shocked."

Women in the Subculture

The reaction of the women to the general behaviour within the subculture varied somewhat according to the length of their association with

the group. Much of the ruggers' behaviour failed to elicit any negative comment from them, and a high degree of tolerance was generally exhibited. Heavy drinking by their companions did not seem to be a disturbing feature, and the songs seldom bothered the women to any noticeable extent. One of the women commented on the obscene song tradition. "I was embarrassed the first time I heard them, but after that I quite liked the songs and sometimes I join in the singing." Continued exposure to such behaviour was obviously an important factor in the women's acceptance of the situation, as the wife of one of the players pointed out. "Some of the girls I've talked to are really put off to begin with until they get to know the guys. Then, because they know the guys and like the guys, the songs don't bother them and they end up laughing at them."

In common with some of the ruggers, the women were inclined to be much less inhibited in their attitudes and behaviour when they had been drinking. Describing her reaction to her initial attendance at a rugby party, one of the women commented that "they were singing all the usual songs, and I really liked most of them. There were a few that were pretty gross, but I thought they were fun. Of course, I was really drunk, too. When I'm sober, sometimes the songs will get to me, and if it gets too gross I don't enjoy the party that much, but when I get drunk then I really enjoy it."

The overriding complaint that most of the women voiced when they first became involved in the rugby subculture was that they were virtually cut off from their partners at most of the social functions. "I honestly felt completely ignored. Most of the time I might as well not have been there. You get used to it after a while, but it's a lot different if we're out by ourselves." That some of the women were consider-

ably disturbed by this treatment was obvious. "T_____ wasn't very nice at rugby parties, and I'd just keep to the side with the other girls. Most of the time when we first went out, we were going out with all the rugby guys and it wasn't much of a relationship. He's settled down a bit now, and he pays a lot more attention to me when just the two of us are together."

Rather than put up with such treatment, some of the women preferred to avoid the rugby functions altogether, although there was a certain ambivalence expressed at times. "I don't think it's bad for guys to do whatever they want to do, as long as they don't do it in front of their wives and girlfriends. B_____ plays around sometimes, and I resent that when I'm there. He's just flirting -- I learnt that, although I wasn't so sure at first. I've never had anyone take off on me so much at parties, but it's only when he's drunk. A lot depends on how many girls are there. He really seems to like the attention of other girls, and spends a lot of time talking and laughing with them. At one party he sat down with a girl he hadn't seen for years. He spent the whole evening with her and I got pretty upset. After that I stayed away for a while because I don't really want to go and watch him do that. But I want to go and have a good time, too, because I really enjoy most of the guys. They're a lot of fun."

The women did object to certain of the behavioral traditions within the subculture, and their negative reaction to the "butt biting routine" has already been discussed. Nevertheless, all of these traditions were generally accepted with a certain degree of equanimity. Attitudes changed with continued exposure to the subculture, and the "veterans" seemed reasonably content with the situation. "G_____ and I don't hang

on to each other at the parties. We sort of separate and spend our time with other people. I never feel ignored, but there are times when I just get bored with other people and then I might feel that I'm not getting my share of his attention. But when we're alone, we're so tight and close that that makes up for it. When we're with other people it's to be with other people, and it doesn't matter if we don't spend much time together. I always know that he's going home with me so it doesn't matter one way or another."

The attitude of the vast majority of women seemed tempered by the fact that they had an implicit, and generally well-founded, belief that their husbands and boyfriends remained loyal to them when they were away on road trips. "A few of the guys on the team give the impression that they play around, but J_____ said he never did. I completely believe him, and I'm sure that he never did." It seems that this same degree of trust was not as evident within some of the other rugby clubs, however. One of the women who had been previously associated with another team claimed that "a lot of the girls didn't like the parties. There was one girl who went to all the parties just to keep an eye on her boyfriend, and she'd sit in the corner all night. I don't think the guys here go to such extremes. A lot of the guys in P_____ would want to take off on their wives, but it's not the same here."

To a much greater degree than their male counterparts, many of the women felt quite strongly that their parents would react negatively towards the behaviour typical of the subculture. "They wouldn't like the parties at all. My parents are very, very straight and they just wouldn't be able to take it. If they knew what the parties were like, they'd be very upset with me for going." Another commented that her parents "would

probably die if they saw what went on, and they certainly wouldn't want me to go back. They just wouldn't understand." Such a reaction was fairly common, and serves to emphasize the belief held by a majority of the group that it was difficult for "outsiders" to "appreciate" the behaviour of the members without an intimate knowledge of the social situation and an understanding of the social structure and traditions of the subculture.

Again, such an attitude highlights the anomaly of attempting to define certain behaviour as "deviant" without consideration of the social situation in which that behaviour occurs. It was clear that many of the women, as with the ruggers, felt that the behaviour _per se_ was not deviant, but that it could and would be regarded as such in different social contexts. One of the women perceived this situation all too clearly. "The behaviour doesn't bother me now. But have you ever tried to explain this sort of thing to someone else. I tried to explain a rugby party to some friends, and the more I explained the deeper I got and the worse it sounded. Pretty soon it got to the point where I just gave up. I couldn't do it."

In summary, it would seem fair to claim that none of the traditions and rituals, nor the typical behaviour of the ruggers and women, could be classified as "deviant" within the frame of reference of the subculture. While some of the members may have had misgivings concerning active participation in certain activities, the typical reaction was one of solid support for the characteristic behaviour within the subculture. The women were more opposed to certain specific traditions, but their peripheral role within the group was such that sanctions against these traditions, even had they been attempted, could not have been successfully

imposed on the group as a whole. Most of the members were aware that much of their behaviour was viewed by others as deviant, yet for various reasons this seldom acted as an inhibiting factor on their general behaviour in public.

Relations With the University

The Rugby Club, as a university sports club organized and controlled by students, generally enjoyed cordial relationships with the student political organization (ASUM) and the general student body. A number of the members of the club were non-students, but the club still qualified for financial assistance from ASUM funds by ensuring that the elected officers of the club were all registered students at the university. In the early years, the allocation from these funds was minimal, but increasingly larger grants were provided from 1973 onwards.

One reason for this was the growing disenchantment of the general student body with the official athletic programmes organized and controlled by the University Athletic Department. Up until 1973, ASUM had allocated a significant annual grant towards the conduct of these programmes, but in 1974 all student contributions to the Athletic Department budget were cut off completely. Such a step reflected a growing concern that the official athletic programmes were uneducational, were allocated a grossly inflated share of university funds to cater for a minimal number of students, and were providing a dehumanizing experience for the athletes concerned.

That such an attitude, at least among the ASUM officers if not amongst the total student population, had beneficial effects for the club was obvious. The philosophy of the club was one which appeared to be in

line with student opinion of the time, a point emphasized in an editorial in the student newspaper, the Kaimin, commenting on the allocation of ASUM funds: "Among the commendable achievements made during the budgeting sessions are: Reasonable funding for club sports -- the ones that emphasize fun, participation and fellowship; not winning, scholarships and dehumanization" (Landers, 1975: 2).

It was not only the general philosophy towards the game, however, which was responsible for solid student body support for the Rugby Club. Previous editorials in the Kaimin had sometimes raised the question whether club sports warranted financial support in view of their rather limited appeal to spectators. The fact that the members of the club were active in raising the bulk of their own funds was something that created considerable goodwill towards the sport, and helped to overcome such opinion. Commenting on the difficult task of allocating student funds, one of the delegates to the student body clearly spelled out the reason for the positive response the ruggers usually received when making their budget requests:

> I only wish that ASUM had sufficient money to cover the expenses of every group that has come before us, but we do not. One alternative to this problem is to . . . expect the members of the individual groups to put in more of their own money. I just wish that all the clubs on campus would take a lesson from the Rugby Club. During the past two years the Club has earned well over one thousand dollars per year because they cared enough to scrap around and do some work (O'Grady, 1975: 2).

The financial contributions from the student body, while not essential for the survival of the club, were certainly welcomed by the ruggers. Suggestions did arise from time to time within the subculture that the club might well disassociate itself completely from the university, these

being largely prompted by non-student members of the club. The increasing annual contribution from ASUM, however, seemed to be a deciding factor in the ultimate rejection of these proposals.

It would be fair to suggest, then, that the ruggers were in many ways perceived as being closely aligned to the dominant ideology of the general student body, the norms and values of the group being acceptable to the students. Far from being considered a deviant group within the larger university subculture, they appeared to be more readily identified with by other students than were the members of the established sports, particularly the football players. Whether such a description represents an accurate portrait concerning the relationship between the ruggers and the majority of the student body is virtually impossible to assess, a frequent assertion being that the "silent majority" are often not well represented by student politicians. Nevertheless, strong support from the latter, reasonably consistent and positive coverage in the student newspaper, and a growing spectator appeal suggested a considerable degree of student acceptance of the ruggers and their sport.

Rugby and the Mass Media

Prior to 1973, there was little press coverage of rugby in Missoula, and no coverage whatsoever from the other branches of the mass media. Increasing interest in the sport by the students, and a more organized and considerably more extensive schedule of games in 1974, were responsible for initiating changes in media attitudes towards the sport. This was in part explained by the fact that more conscious efforts were made by the Rugby Club to attract media attention, and by 1975 the club had appointed its own public relations officer to ensure that details of

the games were made available to the press.

Initially, the local newspaper, the Missoulian, was not prepared to detail a sports reporter to cover the games, but they readily accepted copy provided by the team, and published this with little alteration. The increased coverage undoubtedly served to further increase interest in the game amongst the student body, and helped to present an "official" image of the sport to the general public, a factor which may have some relevance in relation to the public reaction towards the subculture. As local interest in the sport was generated, the Missoulian's support further increased, staff photographers often being in attendance at the games and regular reports of the results being promptly published.

Although broadcast reports of the matches by local radio stations were never seriously considered, the stations did cooperate in other ways. Probably the first instance of such cooperation occurred in 1974, when the station which was handling the basketball commentaries for the university agreed to announce the results of the raffle conducted by the Rugby Club during the half-time break in the game. From this time onwards, most of the local stations were generally supportive of the club's programme and regularly broadcast details of the schedule and results of the games whenever such information was provided for them.

Probably the two major highlights in terms of media presentation of the club's activities both occurred in 1975. The first of these was the decision by one of the local television stations to include a short film of game highlights from the first major tournament hosted by the Rugby Club in Missoula. These highlights were presented on both the early and late evening programme of local news and sports, and heralded a considerable step forward in media promotion of the game. It was significant

to note that throughout the filming the camera remained carefully focused on the games in progress, no scenes of the spectators and ruggers gathered around kegs of beer on the sidelines being shown.

Of even greater significance in terms of beneficial publicity for the club was a widely syndicated Associated Press release concerning rugby at the University of Montana, the article being published by numerous papers throughout the country, including the New York Times. This article (see Appendix C) focused its attention on the possibility of rugby becoming a viable alternative for football within the athletic programmes of those universities which were beginning to find the crippling costs of maintaining a competitive football programme beyond their resources. Although such a possibility appears virtually unforseeable, at least in the immediate future, it did serve to highlight the growing popularity of the sport, interest being generated in rugby not only by those financial concerns already indicated, but because the sport appeared to incorporate a philosophy more in keeping with the "counter-culture" ideology in vogue in many American universities.

Public Reaction Towards the Subculture

Evidence already presented suggests that the behaviour of members of the rugby subculture elicits a somewhat mixed reaction from strangers attending private social functions of the subculture and the general public who come into contact with the ruggers in bars, restaurants and other public places. With regard to private rugby parties, strangers often experienced acute feelings of embarrassment, the women in particular often finding themselves in particularly distressing situations. Even the players on other rugby teams occasionally found the behaviour of the

Missoula ruggers offensive at times, although this generally occurred only in those situations involving contact with newly established rugby clubs.

An incident which occurred at a party in P_____ serves to highlight what seems to be an important feature of public reaction to the behaviour of the ruggers. Commenting on the incident, one of the women claimed that "it was the worst party I've ever been to. The guys got really, really gross and they really got out of hand. They were singing "Allouette," and passing girls around and putting their hands all over them. My brother and his wife walked in with two friends and their wives. The girls were German and couldn't speak English very well. For some reason, all the guys gathered around one of them and started singing and pawing at her. Her husband almost started swinging, and there was so much noise and confusion that she was in tears in about five minutes. My brother was kind of disgusted with that, but he'd been to a rugby party before. He knew it was all in fun and that they didn't mean to be cruel, but they were just really drunk. He likes to go along for a while and kind of stay in the background and just watch, but he doesn't really like to bring his wife."

There seems little doubt that many of the public obtained some sort of vicarious enjoyment in observing the uninhibited behaviour within the group, provided that they were reasonably secure in a non-participant role. Patrons in bars frequently encouraged the ruggers in their behaviour by buying rounds of drinks, and often requested further rugby songs. A negative reaction, however, especially from women, was just as likely to act as a catalyst for further rowdiness and obscenity, <u>any</u> reaction being sufficient to motivate the ruggers to continue.

Displaying considerable acumen, the ruggers usually reserved their "best performances" for lower class bars and restaurants or for those places which were known to be the local "headquarters" of the various rugby clubs. In Missoula, the Downtown Tavern was known as the "rugby bar" of the town, and its closure during a change of ownership in 1975 presented the ruggers with something of a dilemma. It became necessary for the club to "adopt" another bar as their headquarters, but it was apparent that the new venue would have to be carefully chosen. One of the ruggers commented on their eventual choice. "It's a pretty loose place anyhow, and the customers seem to like us. The bartenders don't mind our singing, and we really haven't had any problems there. I think if we keep things under control for a while we'll soon be able to take the place over. Once we get established they won't try and stop us."

One of the co-proprietors of this particular bar had a rather different viewpoint, however. "I wouldn't think that any of the men who hang out at the bar would mind the singing, and most of the women who've been going there for years would probably put up with it. But if they started to get really rowdy, or started to take their clothes off or anything like that they'd get evicted immediately. I don't think that would go over very well at all. The people that hang out there are not the type of people who would condone that kind of behaviour. So much depends on the reaction from the established clientele. If they got upset with the behaviour the bartenders would quickly put a stop to it or ask the players to leave."

Another factor to be considered, however, is that whenever the ruggers moved into a bar, the beer sales rose quite dramatically, and it was obvious that this particular bar was doing a great deal more business

than it had prior to the ruggers' arrival. One particular weekend before the closure of the Downtown Tavern clearly illustrates why it was that the management of such places was prepared to tolerate the excesses of the group. The occasion was a home game against a visiting Canadian side, and the pre- and post-game parties, in addition to a further celebration on the Sunday, were all held at the Tavern. The weekend was a particularly riotous one, with more than the usual amount of damage occurring.

I discussed the activities of the weekend with the manager of the bar, and his reaction was significant. "I put out sixty pitchers, and by the end of the weekend fifty-eight of them had been stolen. There were dozens of glasses broken as well. I also donated three kegs of beer, and we must have filled up a good number of free pitchers too. In spite of all this, we made more profit over the weekend than we have in any other weekend for months." He was not at all disturbed by the behaviour which had occurred, at least in retrospect, the financial gain outweighing any misgivings he may have felt at the time.

The ruggers always seemed to receive a very positive response from the general public whenever they were on tour. During one section of the annual spring tour in 1975, the ruggers consumed considerable quantities of alcohol on their tour bus, and by the time that they arrived at their planned stop for the night many of the players were highly inebriated. Despite their condition, however, they were successful in negotiating cut rates at a local motel, and in addition persuaded the manager to allow considerably more than the regulation number of persons to occupy each unit.

In some of the smaller towns where the team was scheduled to play, the ruggers received an enthusiastic response from the local populace.

One such occasion was the visit to W_____, where it seemed that the forthcoming match had attracted considerable public interest. "It was the talk of the town, and there were posters up everywhere. If you walked into a drugstore, people wanted to talk about the game." The team used to receive a similar positive response at the wineries in California which were always featured on the itinerary of their major tours. Rather than join in the tour of the facilities which is the normal prelude to sampling the finished product of the wineries, many of the members would proceed immediately to the tasting room where they were frequently treated to rounds of "rugger specials" considerably in excess of the one or two small samples normally offered to visitors.

The reaction towards the behaviour of the group amongst my own acquaintances varied somewhat. Most of my university colleagues were highly amused at the performances of the ruggers, and were always eager to be informed of the latest escapades of the group whenever I returned from road trips with the team. Several of the graduate students and some of the faculty accompanied me to parties at the Downtown Tavern. They were frequently amazed at the behaviour they witnessed, and the women would not attend unless guaranteed of my presence, but none of them expressed any strong negative feelings towards the experience. On the one occasion that I discussed some of the typical behaviour of the ruggers with my elderly landlady, however, she was quite shocked and distressed by some of the stories, and the subject was not broached again.

I also had the opportunity to discuss the behaviour of the group with several of the local attorneys in Missoula. The following reaction appeared to be fairly typical of many Missoulians with whom I had had similar discussions. Having learned of some of the common activities of

the group, the attorney commented that he would "probably leave the bar if they started performing like that, because I'd be worried about altercations. The actions wouldn't really disturb me, particularly if I knew the individuals, but it would probably turn me off if they were complete strangers. I certainly wouldn't report it." The evidence would appear to suggest that such an attitude prevailed amongst a considerable number of the public in general.

Ruggers and the Police

For all of their frequent violations of the law, the ruggers maintained excellent relationships with local law enforcement officers, and seldom got into serious difficulties in their dealings with the police or sheriff's deputies. Perhaps the most common breach of the law within the subculture was the ruggers continual violation against possessing open containers of beer in a public place. Prosecutions for such an offense occur regularly in Missoula, yet none of the ruggers had ever been arrested or charged on this account.

A typical incident outside the Downtown Tavern one Saturday evening illustrates the normal police reaction towards the ruggers with regard to this particular offense. Two of the players were standing outside the Tavern conversing with the policemen on the beat, and both were quite unconcernedly drinking their beer in front of the officers. Another of the ruggers emerged from the Tavern and exclaimed "Hey, you guys! It's illegal to be drinking out here," to which one of the officers replied, "Hell, we're not going to arrest them. Everyone's having too much fun." On another occasion, several visiting rugby players were walking down the main street of the town with glasses of beer in their hands. The officer

in the patrol car who pulled up beside them simply advised the ruggers to empty their glasses as soon as possible.

Policemen on patrol regularly visited the Downtown Tavern when visiting rugby teams were in town, and were frequently in attendance when the behaviour of the ruggers was at its least inhibited, yet no arrests for disorderly behaviour, destruction of property or indecent exposure were ever made. On occasion they were quite amazed at the antics of the group, but their reaction was generally to ignore what was going on (see Appendix B). They seemed to rather enjoy their brief intrusions, one of the regular patrolmen frequently commenting that he wished he could "take off his uniform and join the party."

The "butt biting" tradition provides a further example of the frequent commission of a legal offense which was never acted upon, although it was extremely rare for complaints to be laid. Perhaps the most notable demonstration of this failure to act was the incident which occurred at the river raft race. In addition to being viewed by some hundreds of spectators, the incident was also witnessed by a majority of the large number of sheriff's deputies in attendance. Although the woman was considerably upset at being bitten the crowd reacted positively toward the incident, many of the spectators giving the offending rugger a good deal of vociferous applause. No attempt was made by the deputies to even reprimand the rugger for his action.

The incident in the Downtown Tavern, which has also been previously described, did result in some police action as a result of the woman's complaint, although it could hardly be viewed as significant. One of the ruggers who remained at the Tavern after the guilty member had vacated the scene described the situation which eventuated. "The cops came in

and cornered us and asked us if we knew a guy named S_____. I said 'No. I don't even know my own name.' The cop says, 'Look, I'll haul you in if you're not careful. You were with him -- you must know his name,' but I told him I'd never heard of him before. A guy at the bar said 'She should have had her butt bitten a long time ago,' and the cop threatened to haul him in too, but in the finish he gave up and left." No further efforts were made to apprehend the rugger in question.

A more serious incident, in terms of its consequences, occurred during a visit from one of the Canadian rugby clubs. Following an evening of heavy drinking at the Tavern, one of the Canadian ruggers, accompanied by one of his hosts, decided to pay a visit to a nurses' home attached to one of the local hospitals. The alarm was raised as the rugger climbed the fire escape on the exterior of the building, and the police arrived as the two were attempting to gain entry through a fourth floor window. They were promptly arrested and taken down to the station. The Missoula rugger was surprised at such strong action by the officers. "I said to them, 'This is a bit much isn't it?' But they explained that because of the increasing incidence of rape and sexual assaults on women in the area over the past few months that they were treating the incident seriously. We explained that A_____ was a visitor from Canada, and that he was down here to play rugby, and we told them we were just drunk and being stupid. They questioned us for a while, but they finally let us go and didn't charge us with anything."

Of considerable importance, at least as far as the ruggers themselves perceived the situation, was the advisability of being extremely courteous towards the police whenever they were apprehended as a result of their activities. The wisdom of such a course of action was frequently

commented upon by members of the subculture. One of the ruggers who had been discovered smoking marijuana with three companions in a car parked in front of the Downtown Tavern summed up the feelings of the group. "As long as you're polite, it's okay. We were sitting out front when they caught us, but we were very polite. They just told us to go home and smoke the rest. We acted cool, and laughed with them and they treated it like a joke. If we'd given them any trouble they'd probably have thrown us in jail."

That such an attitude is significant in terms of police reaction is suggested by the arrest of one of the Canadian ruggers during a tournament in W_____. The background to the arrest was provided by one of the Missoula players. "We were driving downtown to a restaurant, and D_____ had his wife and a friend in the front seat. Three of us were sitting in the back, and J_____ was lying across on top of us. D_____'s wife had her arm across the back of the front seat, and someone grabbed her hand and stuck it on J_____'s nuts. Then we undid his zipper and stuck her hand in and she started screaming. D_____ was looking around, trying to see what was going on, and he ran over the curb a couple of times. The cops were following us and they pulled him over. He got really obnoxious and gave the cops a bad time, and they ended up handcuffing him and arresting him. They told us we'd have to get another ride because they were going to tow the car away." The Canadian rugger was subsequently charged and convicted of driving while under the influence of alcohol.

In none of the numerous incidents, either in Missoula or during road trips, which brought the members of the subculture into contact with law enforcement officers, had any of them been charged with an offense.

Despite the fact that much of their behaviour violated not only generally accepted standards but also codified law, there were no recorded instances of official measures being taken against them other than the occasional reprimand.

This situation led to an element of bravado occasionally becoming apparent in the comments of some of the ruggers, more notably amongst the rookies in the team. One of the new players described his participation in a drunken procession through a small town which caused some considerable disruption to the flow of traffic. "I felt like I was doing something wrong, and that made it fun. We were marching down the middle of the main street and then a cop car drove up. I said 'There's the cops. They're going to arrest us,' but B_____ said 'They wouldn't dare.' I thought, 'You're right, they wouldn't dare, we'd tear the place apart.'" This, however, was a very superficial attitude, and the ruggers were particularly circumspect in their behaviour whenever an actual confrontation with the police occurred.

Discussion

A notable feature of the behaviour within the subculture, particularly in view of the resulting reaction and consequences, was the ruggers' attitude towards, and treatment of, women. The obscene song tradition vilifies women in general, several of the "deviant traditions" within the subculture involve actual bodily assault on women, and much of the ruggers' general behaviour is specifically calculated to upset and embarrass the women in the audience. While reaction varied towards certain of these activities, sanctions against such behaviour were not applied within the subculture, negative sanctions were not imposed by the general

public or were irrelevant in that they could be safely ignored, and police reaction was totally insignificant.

In light of this situation, it would seem that Polsky's (1969) claim concerning the rarity and decreasing importance of "all-male subcultures" in America is in need of some qualification. The rugby subculture may not serve as a "sacrosanct refuge" from women. However, the ruggers dominate the subculture to the extent that women are relegated to a position from which the men have no need to seek refuge. The subculture still provides an environment in which the members can "bolster their threatened masculinity and, at the same time, mock, objectify and vilify women" (Sheard and Dunning, 1973: 12), even though it is no longer a "male preserve." The presence of women, far from militating against any of these excesses, has simply provided the opportunity for the ruggers to verbally and physically abuse the women themselves rather than womanhood per se.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that similar attitudes and behaviour towards women prevail in many sports subcultures, the situation with regard to the status of women within these groups appearing to be even more debasing. According to Meggyesy:

> Coaches and football players generally have a peculiar attitude toward male-female relationships. At Syracuse the prevailing opinion was that it was somehow healthy and manly to go out and get drunk, pick up some girl, lay her and maybe even rough her up a bit. To the coaches, this was "normal" behaviour; but they got upset if you began to develop a genuine relationship with a woman (1971: 66).

Support for the fact that such an attitude is common is provided by Young: "What shocked me was that among the team I was considered just one of the girls. There'd been girls before and there'd be girls later"

(1974: 80-81).

In her considerable indictment of the world of professional football, Barnes (1973) maintains that many players are concerned with quantity rather than quality in their sexual relationships with women. "With some of these guys, when it comes to sex, there is never anything tender or nice about it anymore. It's just wham-bam-thank-you-ma'am" (1973: 121). A possible explanation for this attitude is suggested by Young:

> society spoils athletes -- especially that segment of society that happens to be female. People treat athletes as though they're something special. Nothing is too good for them. Since this starts in high school, it doesn't take long for the athletes to start believing it. They begin to act, some of them, as though they're here on a free pass, particularly when it comes to the pursuit and conquest of women (1974: 84).

Other sports biographies and autobiographies contain further evidence that male-female relationships in the world of sport tend to be superficial and male dominated, women frequently being regarded as little more than a "readily available commodity." As Hargreaves has suggested, sport stresses masculinity and masculine superiority, and "probably contributes greatly to perpetuating redundant male-female social differentiation" (1975: 17).

In commenting on a "depressing feature" of New Zealand drinking patterns, Ausubel offers the following description of a typical party:

> Inebriation commonly proceeds to the point of insensibility and is not infrequently accompanied by brawling, vulgar cavorting, the use of obscene language in mixed company, indecent propositioning and the smashing of windows and furniture. Comparable drinking practices in the United States are more characteristic of socially demoralized lower-class groups . . . and tend to be more unreservedly condemned at other social class levels (1965: 52, emphasis added).

Although sports teams could hardly be described as "socially demoralized

lower-class groups," such a description would seem to be appropriate to describe many of their social functions, obscene and abusive behaviour toward women being even more extreme in many instances. While condemnation of such behaviour may occur, it would seem to have had little impact in creating a change in the norms and traditions of many sports subcultures in America.

To categorize such behaviour as characteristic of the lower class, as Ausubel has done, suggests a strong element of class bias. His description would seem to closely parallel that provided by Sheard and Dunning (1973) of the typical English rugby party, yet the players themselves are more frequently from middle and upper middle class origins, and similar observations may be made with respect to this present investigation. An interesting contrast to Ausubel's stance is provided by Hutchinson's (1966) lament on the demise of the Working Men's Clubs in England as an "all-male preserve," which suggests that lower class behaviour towards women may at times be considerably more enlightened. Allowing women open access to the Clubs, according to Hutchinson, "has meant the destruction of a very personal, very masculine myth" (1966: 18). While "male comradeship" has been broken down, however, Hutchinson suggests that it was the men themselves who instigated the change, "burying their own need for aggressive solidarity and making Andy Capp a comic anachronism, becoming civilized in the way in which the world recognizes as civilised these days" (1966: 19). Such civility would hardly appear to be a dominant characteristic of the masculine world of sport.

While any negative public reaction would seem to have had little effect on the behaviour of athletes, it would seem that police reaction has been to a large extent similarly ineffective in controlling or curbing

excesses in behaviour. This may be partly explained by the fact that on many occasions the police seem willing to leave the disciplining of the players in the hands of coaches and management. Allen describes the situation in which a complaint was laid by a woman against baseball players over a "Peeping Tom" incident. "The security men stood off to a side. [Manager] Richards had promised them he would handle the matter, find the guilty party, and make him responsible for the act. . . . The club paid the hotel for the damages" (1974: 53-54). The damage, it seems, was of greater consequence than the invasion of the woman's privacy.

According to Barnes (1973), theft is a common occurrence in professional football. "The rookies don't know how long they are going to be with the team, and some of them will take anything [from the hotel] which isn't nailed down" (1973: 63). The attitude seemed to be that as long as this was confined to items such as "sheets, blankets, towels, bedspreads, small pictures, ashtrays and stuff like that they're not going to worry about it. They're insured" (1973: 63). Barnes maintains that the police were never called in to investigate, and that the ball clubs only charged the players if hotel rooms were completely stripped. Similarly, in the case of excessive damage to property, team management would foot the bill in order to prevent the matter from being taken further. "The ball club paid out $500 and $1,000 to a certain hotel on two separate occasions . . . for damages" (Barnes, 1973: 64).

This special treatment for athletes, and the "protective shield" which is erected around the players, inevitably leads to a certain arrogance in their attitudes towards law enforcement. As Allen suggests, "ballplayers and police get along remarkably well. Each knows that belting a girl around in a car is just clean, wholesome fun. The cop also

knows that the player can't stand having any such experience make the newspapers" (1974: 115-116). That serious criminal behaviour may be ignored in such a climate must appear to be a distinct possibility, and Barnes maintains that this does in fact occur:

> I can tell you of one ball player that I know personally who should have been charged with rape at least three times. . . . The guy [may be] brought up on an assault charge . . . . The court reporter is not always in court when the case comes up, and if he is, . . . you touch his wallet a little. It seldom hits the press. A few of the things do get into the papers, but a hell of a lot of things don't . . . . If the club wants it out of the newspapers, it won't get in the newspapers (1973: 121-122).

Not only may such incidents be kept out of the newspapers, but it also appears that they may even be prevented from reaching the courts. Parrish describes an incident where a police captain experienced considerable frustration "during Jimmy Brown's assault and battery trial in 1965 when he began to feel pressures from superiors and politicians to stop his probe into [the footballer's] case" (1972: 205).

Meggyesy is another who suggests that even charges for serious assault may be circumvented by the efforts of team management:

> On this occasion, as on many others, the athletic department came to [the] rescue and kept him out of serious trouble. [He] was by no means the only football player the athletic department had to bail out. In fact, one of its main functions . . . was to keep guys out of jail. . . . With all the wheeling and dealing the athletic department does on your behalf, you get the feeling that you're immune from normal responsibilities (1971: 82-83).

In view of such evidence, it would seem fair to claim that the sports environment generally provides considerable opportunity for the expression of attitudes and behaviour which would generally be described as deviant. This behaviour, however, is not in the nature of "secret deviance," as

the general public and agencies of law enforcement may be fully aware of its incidence. Since similar behaviour by others before the same audience may result in negative or legal sanctions being imposed against the actors, the term "legitimate deviance" as a suitable label for such behaviour by athletes would appear to be an appropriate one.

VIII

SPORT AND DEVIANCE: A CONCLUDING ANALYSIS

This study has examined the behaviour of members of the rugby subculture, and has focused its attention on that behaviour which appeared to violate the generally accepted standards of the larger community. In spite of the fact that such behaviour appeared to be commonplace, no significant sanctions were imposed against the behaviour of members of the subculture by the general public, and legal sanctions against them were virtually non-existent. In this concluding analysis an attempt will be made to explain why seemingly "deviant" behaviour by sportsmen in non-sport situations fails to invoke the societal reaction which might otherwise be expected in such situations.

Deviants and Deviance

Perhaps the first point to be considered with respect to an understanding of the concept of deviance is that both people and their behaviour may be regarded as deviant. According to Clinard, "Only those deviations in which behaviour is in a disapproved direction, and of sufficient degree to exceed the tolerance limit of the community, constitute deviant behavior" (1968: 28). Similarly, Cohen claims that deviant behaviour is that which violates certain rules, and the violation "excites some disapproval, anger or indignation" (1966: 1). Both of these definitions, however, omit the possibility that individuals themselves may be

regarded as deviant irrespective of their behaviour. For example, a long haired motorcyclist wearing a jacket with an embroidered patch of a winged skull and helmet and the words "Hell's Angels" (cf. Thompson, 1967) may well excite anger or disapproval and may not be tolerated by a particular community, not because of any specific behaviour which he exhibits, but simply because of the image his mere presence may create in the minds of the general public. As Cohen (1973) has pointed out, the Mods and Rockers in Britain did not have to do anything for sanctions against them to be imposed, they simply had to appear: "These were not the sort of people to attract . . . and the discouragement they faced was all too obvious. Some were refused service in cafes and pubs, chased away if they were congregating around a shop" (1973: 196).

There are other factors which must be taken into consideration in attempting to come to grips with a meaningful understanding of the concept of deviance. The first is that deviance is not necessarily a quality of the act, even the deliberate killing of a human being becoming sanctioned in our society during a time of war. Although most deviant behaviour may well be a quality of the act itself (cf. Taylor et al., 1973), it is still necessary to take into account the social context in which the act occurs. Of even greater significance, however, is the social status of the actor. Unless such status is considered, it becomes impossible to reconcile the fact that similar behaviour in similar circumstances by different actors may elicit a totally different response from the wider society. It may be possible to illustrate this latter point by briefly examining a negatively sanctioned subgroup in society, the delinquent gang, and making a comparison between the characteristics of these gangs and sports subcultures.

Delinquent Gangs and Sports Subcultures

The term "gang" is a shorthand way for sociologists to refer to a closely integrated group, although unfortunately the choice of individuals to whom the term is applied seems more often to rest upon their evident resource to deviant behaviour rather than upon any clear indication of their degree of social integration. In Thrasher's (1927) classic survey of Chicago gangs, he described the way in which relatively diffuse play groups become solidified, as a result of conflict, into gangs which develop a group self-consciousness, a name, and an attachment to a local territory. These gangs eventually disbanded as most of their members became conventionalized into the athletic and sporting clubs of the area, whilst a residue continued into the criminal subculture.

In the most prevalent view, the gang is seen as a kind of primary group, highly structured, relatively permanent and autonomous, and possessing a well developed delinquent tradition which is transmitted to new members. Suttles (1968) does not use the word "gang" as readily as Thrasher, but certainly the groups that he describes would satisfy the criteria for this appellation. They have names, distinctive territories, persistence over time, internal differentiation, and considerable cohesiveness. An important point to note, however, is that Suttles is anxious to distinguish his "street corner groups" from the delinquent gangs described by the subcultural theorists, insisting that it is extremely rare for a boy to mention that anti-social behaviour is the avowed purpose of the group.

Thrasher's gangs have also been distinguished from some more recent accounts of gangs by Bordua. "Thrasher's boys enjoyed themselves being

chased by the police, shooting dice, skipping school, rolling drunks. It was fun. . . . Cohen's boys and Cloward and Ohlin's boys are driven by grim economic and psychic necessity into rebellion" (1961: 136). These latter groups described by Cloward and Ohlin (1960) and Cohen (1966) are oppositional. They are set against certain aspects of society. Indeed, this inherent characteristic is a defining feature of such groups. They are not occasionally deviant, and their members can only acquire status through the performance of delinquent activities. Such activities are regarded as an essential feature and an indication of group membership.

That a sports team or a sports subculture exhibits many of the characteristics of a gang is evident. They certainly have a group self-consciousness, a name, and an attachment to a local territory. They are also highly structured, persist over time and are relatively autonomous. Although anti-social behaviour is hardly the avowed purpose of such groups, evidence would suggest that "traditions of deviance" may characterize many sports subcultures, the evidence also suggesting that such behaviour may result in the acquisition of status within the group.

Other features of delinquent gangs find almost exact parallels within some sports subcultures. La Fontaine's description of the headquarters of certain street gangs provides a vivid illustration of this point:

> Gangs usually meet at convenient public places within the neighbourhood, but in the older parts of the city they may also establish a permanent headquarters in a small bar or shop. In some of these the members paint on the wall the name of the gang . . . surrounding this with coloured decorations and drawings. The proprietor agrees to the association because of the profit he draws from having a regular clientele (1972: 203).

Such a description would obviously be appropriate for the headquarters of the rugby subculture, the Downtown Tavern.

The activities of delinquent gangs usually vary from the mischievous to the criminal, but as Suttles (1968) suggests, the criminal or anti-social component of the group's behaviour may be largely exaggerated in the minds of the public. It is obvious from the examination of the various sports subcultures that activities within these groups also vary from the mischievous to the criminal, yet the two groups draw a considerably different response from the community and from local law enforcement agencies. As La Fontaine suggests, "The public regards [gangs] with suspicion and even fear, and so are ready to condemn all street gangs as delinquent" (1972: 203).

It would appear that one of the major differentiating features between delinquent gangs and sports subcultures is the oppositional nature of the former. Even Thrasher, whose description of gangs is considerably less oppositional than many other writers, claims that one of the developmental features of the gang is a situation involving conflict. This element of conflict with society is a crucial point to be considered in understanding societal reaction to such groups. Thrasher's hypothesis that gangs eventually disband as most of their members become conventionalized into sports clubs suggests that the latter play a significant role in the acceptable socialization of youth, a factor which has already been emphasized in this study. Although the characteristics of sports groups and delinquent gangs may be similar in many respects, and although much of the behaviour manifest within such groups may also be comparable, the fact remains that the former are perceived as non-threatening to, and in harmony with, the dominant values of the larger society.

Conflict and Consensus

Since the element of conflict is notably absent in the relationship between sport and the dominant society, and since this appears to be an important characteristic which differentiates sports subcultures from other similarly structured but negatively sanctioned groups within society, it would seem worthwhile to further investigate this point. The element of fundamental conflict between a group and the wider society, rather than the actual behaviour of members of that group, seems to be the most important criterion for designating such a group as a "social problem." As Cohen has commented:

> societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests (1973: 9).

Among these groups, according to Cohen, various forms of youth culture predominate, examples being militant student protesters and soccer hooligans.

With regard to student protesters, Wasburn (1976) has examined the protest movement as an instance of a more general class of social phenomena -- that of collective deviance -- and has assessed the utility of extending and applying theories of gang delinquency in order to develop a general theory of this phenomenon. As Wasburn points out, "one sound aspect of the Thrasher-like approach has been ignored by social scientists. This is the claim that some of the activities engaged in by protesters are performed primarily because they are fun" (1976: 37). Nevertheless, it is obvious that the protest movement was perceived by many as a threat to the dominant values of the society. "In the specific case of student protest, representatives of the police, the military and

the judiciary were clearly among those who labelled such activity as deviance," despite the fact that the activists could reasonably have been viewed as "legitimate combatants in social conflict over social issues to be debated by the public" (Wasburn, 1976: 28). It was not necessarily the behaviour of the protesters which was the source of the conflict with society; it was, rather, their ideological stance.

Similarly, considerable concern has been expressed in recent years with respect to the vandalism and violence exhibited by groups of soccer spectators in Britain. However, it seems possible that the amount of attention given to soccer hooliganism may reflect a further "moral panic" (cf. Cohen, 1973), the major concern being not so much with the behaviour itself, but with a certain uneasiness over the motives behind such behaviour. Taylor speculates that football "hooliganism" may be sociologically explicable as a "'democratic' response to the loss of control exercised by a football subculture over its public representatives" (1972: 372), and that the vandalism is not completely arbitrary and without motive (cf. Cohen, 1968; Taylor, 1969). Soccer hooliganism, however, is seen as a "subculture of violence in our society, which contains the more disturbed elements and which . . . happens to have alighted parasitically on the soccer ground" (Taylor, 1969: 204), rather than a possibly legitimate expression of alienation on the part of certain working class groups.

Deviant behaviour within sports subcultures, in contrast to delinquent gangs, student protesters, soccer hooligans and other negatively sanctioned groups within our society, is not considered to constitute a "social problem." Although vandalism may be extreme, and theft and physical and sexual assault not uncommon, the situation is not one which has commanded the attention of social and penal agencies. Since this

behaviour is largely ignored by these agencies of social control, the reason why athletes are accorded such privileges needs to be further examined.

Ideology and Hegemony

Far from being in conflict with the dominant society, Hargreaves (1975) maintains that sport is ideologically compatible with dominant values, and may be interpreted as being a normal part of the socialization process in capitalist society (cf. Althusser, 1971; Spring, 1974; Thio, 1974; Gruneau, 1975). In fact, Hargreaves suggests, sport does not merely reflect the dominant ideology in society, it serves as an agent to inculcate the appropriate values:

> The influence of sport, like any social activity, operates not only at the cognitive or informational level, but also at the level of values and emotions. Mass sport may exert its influence in the sense that it may serve as a vehicle for the inculcation of ideas, values and predispositions at these different levels, which inform specific versions of politics (1975: 7-8).

According to Hargreaves, an understanding of Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony is useful in providing an explanation of how the institution of sport operates in such a manner, and this concept would also seem to be of particular use in explaining the differential reaction towards the behaviour of the various societal subgroups previously examined.

The basic idea behind the concept of hegemony was first provided by Marx. "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas; i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force" (Marx and Engels, 1947: 39). It was Gramsci (1971), however, who fully elaborated on the concept:

> The process that Gramsci describes is one in which

> a dominant class, which controls the economic and political institutions of a society, also possesses privileged access to the primary ideological institutions of that society (religion, culture, education, communications media). The dominant class uses [this] privileged access to propagate values which reinforce its structural position. Such propagation involves not only the inculcation of its values and the censorship of heterodox views but also and especially the ability to define the parameters of legitimate discussion and debate over alternative beliefs, values, and world views (Sallach, 1974: 41).

This is similar to Althusser's (1971) notion that the ruling class, through "ideological state apparatuses," maintains its domination over less privileged groups in society. It would seem justifiable to add sport to the list of "primary ideological institutions," as Althusser has indeed suggested.

In his examination of ideological hegemony in America, Sallach maintains that preliminary evidence supports the hypothesis "that a dominant class exists and has privileged access to cultural and ideological institutions," and "that public belief systems reflect . . . ideological restraints in the form of fragmentation, inconsistency and disinterest" (1974: 47). In exploring the areas of education and mass communication, Sallach claims that discussion and debate is severely circumscribed, thus reinforcing ideological hegemony (cf. Clarke et al., 1975). If the institution of sport is accepted as an integral part of the process of promoting such hegemony, then it would be expected that it would emphasize values appropriate to the dominant ideology and repress alternative or heterodox views.

Within the education system, as Hargreaves suggests, sport has "traditionally embodied an extreme version of hegemonic values. These ideas strongly put into practice the idea that sports have a value in

'character training'" (1975: 22). In capitalist societies, individual success requires discipline, self-reliance, toughness and individual initiative, and sport provides an admirable mode of socialization into these culturally specific mores. Similarly, the media promotes the "correct" image of sport. Sports heroes are represented as possessing "the more conventional virtues, respectability and non-controversiality, . . . stoicism, competitiveness and law abidingness" (Hargreaves, 1975: 21).

With respect to the presentation of the sports hero as a law abiding citizen, Sallach's (1974) claim that discussion and debate is severely circumscribed within ideological institutions takes on added significance for this present investigation. If sport is involved in the hegemonic process, it is likely that there will be a significant repression of the reported incidence of deviant behaviour by sportsmen, since such behaviour is antithetical to the supposed inherent ability of sport to develop "desirable" character. This is not to suggest that all instances of deviant behaviour by sportsmen are ignored, but merely suggests that the incidence of such behaviour is likely to be significantly greater than that which is drawn to the public attention.

On the contrary, similar behaviour within those groups who are seen to be in conflict with the dominant ideology is likely to be overemphasized, and Cohen (1973) suggests that this is indeed the case. With reference to the Mods and Rockers phenomenon, Cohen claims that the "major type of distortion . . . lay in exaggerating grossly the seriousness of the events, in terms of criteria such as the number taking part, the number involved in violence and the amounts and effects of any damage or violence" (1975: 31). Similarly, in the student protest movement, a legitimate debate over alternative beliefs and values was transformed into a

"social problem," reinforcing Sallach's claim that "the most effective aspect of hegemony is found in the suppression of alternative views through the establishment of parameters which define what is legitimate" (1974: 41). As Becker has suggested, there is a considerable element of subjectivity in the definition of a social problem: "The objective condition is necessary but not in itself sufficient to constitute a social problem . . . social problems are what people think they are" (1966: 2).

Criminalization and Legitimization of Deviance

This concluding analysis has suggested that because of their differing positions within the ideological structure of society, societal subgroups are likely to be subjected to differing reactions from agencies of social control. Those groups which are perceived to be in conflict with the dominant ideology are negatively sanctioned, and the "deviant" behaviour of members of these groups is likely to be overemphasized and exaggerated (cf. Suttles, 1968; Cohen, 1973). The members may even be perceived as "deviant" irrespective of their behaviour, and legitimate activities may evoke a negative reaction from the wider society, even to the point of criminalization of such activities (cf. Taylor, 1972; Cohen, 1973; Wasburn, 1976).

With regard to sport in American society, it has been suggested that this institution has a role to play in inculcating ideas and values supportive of the dominant ideology. As such, sports subcultures are positively sanctioned by agencies of social control, and it has been suggested that the incidence of deviant behaviour will be under-reported and often ignored. Listiak's (1974) claim that, in certain circumstances widespread deviant behaviour may be socially sanctioned and highly toler-

ated would seem to be applicable to the sports environment, "legitimate deviance" appearing to be an appropriate term to describe anti-social behaviour by athletes.

In the description of the behaviour of members of the rugby subculture reported in this investigation, evidence of "traditions of deviance" has been presented. The fact that such behaviour fails to invoke significant negative sanctions from the general public or from law enforcement agencies strongly supports the contention that this behaviour is "legitimized" by the society. Evidence concerning the behaviour of athletes in other sports would suggest that this same legitimization process takes place, possibly to an even greater extent, and this would seem to warrant further investigation. It would appear that participation in male team sports, far from acting as a deterrent to deviant behaviour, may actually condone and encourage such behaviour.

The inequity which this situation represents should be a matter for some concern. It is not, however, a concern which should be felt merely by those involved with sport. If there is any merit in this concluding analysis, then by extension it may be presumed that a similar privileged status is accorded to those actors who belong to any societal subgroups which are perceived to be supportive of the dominant ideology in contemporary society. Taylor et al. have suggested that the task which faces us "is to create a society in which the facts of human diversity, whether personal, organic or social, are not subject to the power to criminalize" (1973: 282). Perhaps the first step in such an attempt is to curtail the power to legitimize the deviant behaviour of the privileged.

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APPENDIX A

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE RUGBY SUBCULTURE

Personal Involvement in the Rugby Subculture

My own personal involvement with the University of Montana Rugby Club began in 1973 when I arrived at the university in June to begin work on a Master's degree in the Department of Health and Physical Education. I had come from a fairly typical New Zealand middle class background, and had always had a strong interest in sport. My prior involvement with rugby included sixteen years as a player, and I had been a successful coach during four years of teaching in New Zealand. In addition, I had been a provincial selector-coach for three years, and in 1970 had organized a short tour of Australia with a junior rugby team.

In spite of a strong background in coaching and a typical New Zealander's love for the game, I arrived in Montana with a firm intention not to become involved in university rugby, wishing to concentrate exclusively on my graduate studies. During the first month after my arrival, however, I became closely acquainted with a fellow New Zealander at the university who acted as the Faculty Advisor to the Rugby Club. Having been persuaded to go along to watch one of the informal games organized during the summer against a visiting Canadian club side, I quickly found myself coerced into the role of referee. The two games which I refereed during the summer reinforced my intentions not to become involved with the club. The organization seemed almost non-existent, for the most part the players' knowledge of the game was exceedingly limited, and the major interest seemed to be focussed not so much on the game itself but on the pre- and post-game social activities held at one of the local taverns.

For the next few weeks following this none too satisfactory introduction to the Rugby Club, I received almost daily visits from two of the

veteran members of the team who spent a considerable amount of their time attempting to persuade me to help coach the team during the up-coming fall rugby season. While their keenness could hardly fail to impress, I was adamant in my resolve not to become involved in any way. As I prepared to take up my graduate teaching assistantship duties at the university, however, it soon became obvious to me that the sports activity courses which I was expected to handle were to a large extent North American sports with which I was not at all familiar. In an attempt to resolve this dilemma, I approached my Department Chairman with a proposal to introduce rugby as an activity course in the undergraduate programme. With this agreed upon, it was apparent that if the course could be scheduled at an appropriate time, it would be possible for the Rugby Club members to join in the activity. This enabled me to act as an unofficial coach to the team without necessitating any expenditure of my own time, and appeared to be a suitable compromise to both our interests.

During the short fall season, the club had one road trip to British Columbia for a tournament, and played one home game. My involvement during this period was still minimal, and I did not accompany the team to the Canadian tournament. I did agree to referee the home game against the club's cross-town rivals, the Missoula Cool Blues. It was during the off-season, however, that my role within the Club began to change considerably. One of my most favourable impressions that I gained of the players at this time was their tremendous interest in the game and their willingness to learn. I was also becoming more involved with the social life of the team, having finally joined in some of their drinking sessions at the Downtown Tavern after practice sessions during the fall.

During the winter months, an ambitious plan to make a tour

through Washington, Oregon and California in the spring began to take shape, and with this in mind the club continued to train regularly indoors throughout the winter term. In order to finance such a tour, fund raising schemes were investigated, and it was finally decided to conduct a raffle. The enthusiasm with which the players, their wives, friends and girl friends supported this venture, the closeness of the group both on and off the field, and the openness with which they had accepted me as one of the club, all contributed to my becoming more intimately involved with the group as the preparations for the tour proceeded.

Other factors also affected my attitude towards becoming involved at this stage. At first, I had been uneasy with the lack of organization and discipline associated with the sport in comparison to the situation in New Zealand. Both as a player and later as a coach, I had become accustomed to rugby as highly organized, highly competitive activity. Practices were compulsory, and the sport was characterized by a highly professionalized approach, a dominating bureaucracy, and an attitude towards winning which was compatible in many respects with the prevailing attitudes in American football. Whether the British attitude of "it's not whether you won or lost, but how you played the game" was ever an intrinsic feature of rugby in New Zealand is difficult to estimate, but this is far from the situation at present. To find something of this attitude in American rugby, in a country where "winning isn't everything, it's the only thing," was something of a paradox.

This attitude within the Rugby Club was, however, something that I was now much more sympathetic towards, having been exposed to the idealistic and often polemical writings of the "counter-culturists" and radicals who were calling into question the prevailing ideology in com-

petitive sport in America. Jack Scott's book, The Athletic Revolution, had had some considerable impact on my own thinking. It had forced me to re-examine my own philosophy on coaching and my attitudes towards sport in general, and I was becoming more aware of the fact that my own position was in need of a conscious re-evaluation. As I got to know the members of the club, I began to appreciate more and more their attitude towards the game, their obvious enjoyment of the sport despite the fact that they seldom won a game, and the tremendous comradeship and sense of identity that characterized the group in their off-the-field activities. While it was their participation in rugby that brought them together initially, they seemed to have developed such a close, cohesive group that playing the game appeared almost incidental to these other activities. To be a "rugger" meant much more than playing on the team -- it meant the adoption of a particular life-style with its associated interests, activities and identity.

A second factor which was partly responsible for my decision to become a "fulltime rugger" was associated with my research interests in the graduate programme at the university. My Master's thesis was in essence a replication of Walter Schafer's work in the area of sport and delinquent behaviour. I had been involved in a comparative study of the behaviour of high school athletes and nonathletes in an attempt to test the hypothesis that participation acts as a deterrent to deviant or delinquent behaviour. As Schafer had warned, however, the use of court records and official statistics has considerable weaknesses in attempting to assess the behaviour of different groups of people. Although it was too late to change my approach at this stage, it was obvious to me that if I wished to investigate the "deterrent hypothesis", the best way to

achieve this was to actually observe the behaviour of athletes in non-sport situations. My involvement with the rugby team offered me the opportunity for such first-hand observation, and I decided to attempt such a study. I approached the team and asked them if they had any objections to my carrying out a systematic observation of their behaviour. Their reactions varied a little, but overall it was a highly positive response, with many of the ruggers and others associated with the group expressing a genuine interest in the project.

From this point on, I threw myself whole heartedly into all the activities of the group, going down to the Tavern three to four times a week, and becoming increasingly involved with the preparations for the spring rugby tour. At this stage, however, I was still undecided as to whether I would actually accompany the team on this tour. Observing the behaviour of the ruggers in Missoula was one thing, but committing myself to a three week tour on which it would be impossible to fade into the background or simply withdraw from the situation completely if things got a little out of hand was something altogether different. Stories which had filtered back to me concerning the behaviour of the ruggers on their road trips had always left me feeling rather relieved that I had elected to remain at home.

My "systematic observations" at this time were hardly worthy of the term "sociological", as I was much too inclined to vacate the scene if I found that the behaviour of the ruggers was becoming too uninhibited. My eventual decision to take part in the tour was not really prompted by a desire to gain greater sociological insight into the behaviour of the ruggers. Rather, it was prompted by the fact that my involvement in the preparation for the tour led to increasing social interaction with the

group which in turn helped to gradually diminish my misgivings concerning their behaviour. I quickly came to appreciate that they respected my feelings and attitudes, and I was never forced to participate in activities or pressured into situations against my will. Eventually, my own inhibitions largely disappeared, and I voluntarily took part in most of the rituals, traditions and general activities to the extent that I became a genuine participant in the rugby subculture.

For the next six months I accompanied the team on all road trips, took part in all the social activities at home, and in addition managed to complete my Master's degree. I remained in Missoula during the summer of 1974 and then moved to Edmonton for further graduate study at the University of Alberta. Although my observations of the rugby subculture up until this point in time had been motivated by little more than personal interest and a vague notion that I might one day use the information in some form of publication, it now became feasible for me to continue with the study for the purposes of my doctoral dissertation.

Consequently, I remained in contact with Missoula, and rejoined the team on several road trips which they made to Alberta during the fall rugby season, returning to Montana for a further period of four weeks during the Christmas vacation. In the spring of 1975 I again took part in the Club's annual spring rugby tour, returning to Missoula for a further two-month period during the summer. I managed to accompany the team on one road trip during the fall season, and spent Christmas vacation staying with several of the ruggers. I paid a final visit to Montana in the summer of 1976 to complete certain aspects of the data collection, and to present the members of the subculture with the opportunity of reading the dissertation in order to gain some insight into their reaction towards what I had written.

APPENDIX B

NOTES ON A RUGBY PARTY

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"Notes on a Rugby Party."

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APPENDIX C

ASSOCIATED PRESS RELEASE: RUGBY IN MONTANA

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